This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 00605515 0

ΕΙΣ ΦΑΟΣ
George Bancr

THE LIGHT OF NATURE PURSUED.

BY

EDWARD SEARCH, Esq;

VOLUME II. PART III.

THEOLOGY.

Τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς· ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς, αὐτοῖς ἐφανέρωσε. Τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου, τοῖς ποιήμασι νοούμενα καθορᾶται, ἥτε ἀΐδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θειότης.

ROM. Ch. i. 19, 20.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. JONES, [illegible] FETTER-LANE;

AND [illegible]

T. PAYNE, AT [illegible]

MDCCL[illegible]

LENOX
NEW YORK

THE

LIGHT OF NATURE PURSUED.

VOL. II. PART III.

CHAP. XXIV.

NATURE OF THINGS.

HAVING now diſmounted my Pegaſus and gotten ſafe upon firm ground again, without any bruiſes or broken bones or crack in the Pericranium that my friends can perceive, let us turn him looſe upon the common for the uſe of others who may be diſpoſed to take the like adventurous flight, and let us proceed for the reſt of our way in the ſafer tracts that reaſon ſhall beat out upon the ſolid bottom of experience and obſervation. But ſince in the Illuſion § 71 of the laſt chapter, I have happened to mention a nature of things, which could not ſubſiſt before the things themſelves whereof it was

the nature, and there are many perſons who inſiſt that we may know, by experience of our own thoughts, there are things and a nature of them which muſt have ſubſiſted eternally, uncreated, independent on the Will and power of the Almighty, which he cannot alter nor depart from, but ſerve for an indiſpenſible rule of his conduct in the creation and government of his worlds: ſince this doctrine is ſo zealouſly maintained, it will be worth while, before we canvaſs the truth of it, to enquire what is to be underſtood by that expreſſion, The nature of things. It has been employed by the orthodox, Cudworth in particular building largely upon it as upon the ſole ſtable foundation, but ſeems now to be chiefly in uſe among the freethinkers, who are very forward to tell you preciſely what God can or cannot do: he cannot work a miracle, cannot give a revelation, cannot guide the motions of a free agent, nor make ſuch a one impeccable, nor annex reward to an aſſent of the mind, nor make all his creatures of equal degree without a continued gradation from his own perfections down to nothing; for theſe are contrary to the nature of things. If you aſk what things they mean, or what by the nature of them, they will not vouchſafe, or rather cannot give, an explanation, but are angry with you as a captious

captious perſon for putting the queſtion; yet ſtill go on to lay a mighty ſtreſs upon thoſe words without having any clear or ſettled idea of their import. It ſeems extraordinary that perſons who are ſo ſevere upon others for uſing expreſſions they do not underſtand, ſhould fall into the like abſurdity themſelves, and pretend to build demonſtrations upon principles whereof they have no clearer nor more adequate idea than the vulgar, they affect to ridicule, have of their myſteries: both lay an implicit dependence upon words without a meaning, and both expect that a conſtant repetition of poſitive aſſertions chimed into their ears by others, ſhould paſs for proof and explanation.

2. Since then we can get no light for underſtanding the language from thoſe in whoſe mouths it paſſes moſt currently, let us try what we can ſtrike out for ourſelves: and upon aſking what is meant by things, the firſt obvious ~~queſtion~~ answer occurring is, that they muſt be the ſubſtances exiſting. For the rudiments of our knowledge come all from ſenſation: when we ſee or hear or feel, there muſt be ſome agent, ſome ſubſtance to operate upon our ſenſes: and from hence we derive our evidence of external objects, as we do that of our own exiſtence from the perceptions impreſſed upon us by them, together with

the alterations produced in them by our activity; for there muſt be a ſubſtance to perceive as well as an object to be perceived, and an agent to act as a well as a ſubject to be operated upon.

But our knowledge of ſubſtances ſeems to conſiſt wholly of the differences among them; our definitions and deſcriptions contain the particularities of the ſubject diſtinguiſhing it from every thing elſe. For which reaſon we know nothing of our internal organs, the nerves and fibres of our brain, becauſe whatever diſcoveries anatomy may have made, we have no experience of any diverſity of operation among them, but for ought we can diſcern, our ſenſations of every various kind may come conveyed to us through the ſame channel. For the ſame reaſon many remain ſo ignorant of themſelves, and make ſuch difficulty to fix the idea of their own perceptive individual, becauſe it is the ſame ſelf that receives all their ſenſations, reflections and perceptions whatever: therefore the difference of their perceptions does not lead them into the knowledge of themſelves, tho' it does into that of externals affecting them therewith. For we cannot penetrate the eſſence of ſubſtances, we can apprehend them only by their qualities or powers of affecting us, or of producing and receiving alterations among

among one another, cauſing them to exhibit other appearances than they did before.

But the ſame ſubſtances poſſeſs ſo many qualities, and vary them ſo often according to their ſituations, their mutual affections, relations, compoſitions and aſſociations, that it would be inconvenient for uſe, and indeed impracticable, to call them all to mind: therefore our ideas in common diſcourſe and even in meditation, are for the moſt part if not always partial, containing ſome only but not all of the qualities or circumſtances we may know upon mature conſideration belong to the ſubject in our thoughts. And there is the leſs wonder at this, becauſe the appearances to our ſenſes are likewiſe partial: nobody ever ſaw the whole circumference of a ball, nor all the ſides of a cube. When a man ſtands before us, we ſee only his face and hands and the fore part of his dreſs; and when we would think of him in his abſence, the ſame appearance occurs without the leaſt idea of his back, altho' we know well enough he muſt have one. And when we ſpeak of him ſate down at table, we would not chooſe to think of that unſeemly part without which there can be no ſitting: our idea contains no more than ſo much of [illegible] would appear without

without legs or feet, and in a lower ſituation than if he ſtood upright.

But the ſimilarity of one or a few qualities found in many ſubſtances, differing widely in other reſpects, ſuits our convenience extremely well, enabling us to talk intelligibly of numbers by one name expreſſive of thoſe qualities wherein they agree: whence come our ideas of Genera and Species. For as Mr. Locke obſerves, the name of a ſpecies denotes thoſe qualities wherein a ſet of individuals agree, ſelected from thoſe wherein they may differ; and a genus is a further ſelection out of thoſe qualities, of ſome wherein a greater number of individuals agree who do not agree in them all. Thus the word Horſe expreſſes ſuch particulars as belong to every horſe excluſive of ſize, ſhape or colour, wherein they are not all alike: as the word Animal does ſuch of theſe particulars as belong equally to an eagle, a dolphin or a frog, ſeparated from thoſe peculiar to the ſpecies of horſes. Hence likewiſe we form our judgements, which commonly run upon ſpecies and genus or upon adjectives denominating ſome quality conſidered apart from the ſubſtance. Thus we ſay a horſe is an animal, a crow is black, an elephant bigger than a ſheep. But ſometimes we turn our adjectives into ſubſtantives, and then can make

genus

genus and ſpecies of them as well as of ſubſtances: for red is one ſort of colour, green another, and Colour is the Genus or Kind comprehending thoſe two with all other particular colours under it; as Sound is the genus comprehending all the ſeveral Sorts of ſound that can be made.

3. Of theſe partial ideas one ſpecies is the abſtract, for abſtraction ſignifies the drawing off or ſelection of one or a few things from others wherewith they were by nature connected. When this ſelection is made by the ſenſes, we do not call it an abſtraction, nor unleſs it be done by a voluntary act of the mind: and theſe abſtractions are of two ſorts, thoſe ſtrictly ſo called, as when we talk of abſtract notions or abſtract reaſonings, which are ſuch only as the ſpeculative make with labour of thought for their particular uſe; and others which we are led into without trouble by the common occaſions of life. For there are many abſtract ideas extremely familiar to the vulgar, ſuch as man, bird, noiſe, white, large, and ſo forth, of which they can talk currently yet without any thought of the ſubſtances whereto they belong. Wherefore it ſeems ſtrange that Berkley and ſome others ſhould deny that we have any abſtract ideas, for all partial ideas are in the ſame caſe, whether the

ſeparation

ſeparation be made by our own act or by the operation of our ſenſes; and it is ſo far from being true that we are incapable of partial ideas and appearances, that daily experience teſtifies we have ſcarce any others: but if my ſenſes can exhibit to me a half man ſitting behind a table without legs or lower parts, and my memory can make a further ſeparation by certifying to me a week afterwards that I had ſeen a man ſitting there, yet with ſo little remembrance of his features that I ſhould not know him again if ſhown me, ſurely I can make another ſeparation of a human figure having eyes, noſe, mouth and ſo forth, without thinking whether the noſe be long or ſhort, what colour the eyes are of, or what width the mouth.

And here I have the pleaſure of joining in alliance with my lord Bolingbroke, for the ſpirit of oppoſition ſo little poſſeſſes me that I am glad to concur in ſentiment with any body where I can: I have once or twice ſtood up on behalf of Epicurus, and am now as ready to follow his lordſhip upon the poſſibility of abſtraction and the dependent nature of things, whereon I think he argues cloſely and ſoundly; tho' for the moſt part his philoſophical eſſays, as he calls them, ſeem rather Houſe of Commons harangue as unfit for the ſchools of phi

their lectures would be for the other place, better calculated, like ſome modern orations, for amuſing and tripping up than for counſelling and conducting: yet even here he appears to have proceeded with more zeal for running down poor Cudworth than maintaining the cauſe of truth. And in the courſe of his argument he ſeems to have deſerted it by apoſtatizing into Berkley's notion, that we cannot have the idea of a ſpecies unleſs by ſome particular individual to ſtand as a repreſentative of the reſt: which notion contradicts the conſtant experience of facts. For we talk every day of ſpecies, as men, cattle, birds, noiſes, colours: we know what we mean in uſing theſe terms, and are underſtood clearly by one another; but a man can ſcarce be ſaid to underſtand himſelf who has no ideas of what he ſays, nor to be underſtood by another without ideas of his words. The hearer may have different ideas from the ſpeaker, and then miſapprehends him, but to underſtand aright, the very ſame ideas muſt paſs from the one to the other.

Now the repreſentative individual, to be clearly apprehended, muſt riſe in the imagination with ſome determinate ſize, ſhape, colour, poſture, in motion or quieſcent: therefore if this idea were neceſſary for underſtanding the ſpecific name, no man could certainly

tainly underſtand another in the moſt common converſation, becauſe he could never be ſure the ſame repreſentative, which was in the mind of the other, paſſed unaltered to himſelf. Should I ſend to my bailiff in the country to buy me a couple of milch cows againſt my going down, I ſhould ſeem to underſtand myſelf fully, I believe he would underſtand me as fully and execute my orders punctually; yet I am not conſcious that in giving ſuch orders I have any particular cow in my thoughts: but his lordſhip it ſeems knows them better than I do myſelf, and he aſſures me that I muſt have a repreſentative individual in view, for elſe I could have no meaning in the word Cow. Be it ſo: then this repreſentative muſt be of ſome determinate colour, for there is no individual cow without, and I muſt entreat his lordſhip to tell me what that colour was, for I proteſt I don't know. Suppoſe it red as being the moſt common: but my man muſt have a repreſentative too, becauſe elſe he can have no idea of my orders: perhaps he has been that morning among a drove of welch cattle and takes a black one for his repreſentative. Well then, away he goes to Fair where he ſees two fine cows, one brindle and the other white: he judges them excellent beaſts, in good milk and well worth the money aſked

for

for them: ſo he buys them both and thinks he has done bravely. Now when I come to ſee them am I to quarrel with the poor fellow for diſobeying my orders, or call him blockhead for not underſtanding ſo plain an expreſſion as, Buy a couple of cows? or if he goes to excuſe himſelf upon being not ſo learned a man nor ſo exact in abſtract knowledge, ſhould I tell him that the cows being of different colours, it was impoſſible they could both anſwer either his idea or mine, becauſe neither of us could know what was meant by the ſpecific term Cow without a repreſentative, which muſt be of ſome one determinate colour?

4. It is not uncommon for deep thinking perſons to draw a confuſedneſs over their thoughts by their refinements which the vulgar eſcape, and I think it plain that ſuch as we have been arguing againſt in the laſt ſection, have not always a clear and adequate idea of what is meant by that expreſſion, To have the idea of a thing. They ſeem to underſtand by it ſuch particulars as will ariſe to the imagination when we take a ſingle object under contemplation in our leiſure hours: now I muſt own that whenever I contemplate a ſpecies there does generally, perhaps always, occur an individual before me, with colour, ſhape, members, cloaths or hide or fins or feathers

feathers thereto belonging, and I hold it right to indulge this cuſtom: for ſince our abſtracts derive all originally from the concrete, and are liable to fluctuate and fade in our remembrance, there is no likelier method of renewing and fixing them than by ſight or contemplation of the concrete as being the fountain from whence they ſprung. But this ſerves only for reſtoring ideas known to us before, when we go to new form an idea upon a more perfect model, I never could find a ſingle repreſentative anſwer the purpoſe, but am forced to employ ſeveral.

If I would ſettle with myſelf what is juſtice, I think firſt perhaps of a man paying money that he has borrowed, which is a juſt action; then with Tully, of one ſelling a houſe but concealing that there are bugs in it, or of running prohibited goods, or of the groſs partiality of a father to ſome of his children above the reſt; and thus by turning over a variety of actions in my thoughts, endeavour to fix a compleat and preciſe idea of juſtice, which when gotten, no one of thoſe actions can ſtand for a full repreſentative afterwards, becauſe deſtitute of ſome circumſtances which conſtitute the eſſence of juſtice in others.

So if I met with a perſon that did not know what a triangle was, I might ſhow him

a piece of paper in that form: perhaps the piece is rectangular and he may take that particular into his idea; I may then cut him ſeveral other pieces having various angles, and make him obſerve that they all agree in that circumſtance of their having three ſtrait ſides lying between three corners: if I found him imagining that a triangle muſt be made of paper, I might then produce one of wood or ivory, and remark to him that theſe too agree with the former in the circumſtance before-mentioned. Poſſibly he ſtill thinks a triangle muſt he ſomething of a ſize to be turned about commodiouſly upon a table, when I diſcover this, it will be expedient to carry him into a three corner field, or point to ſome ſtar in the zenith and another in the horizon, and tell him that they, together with the ſpot of ground we ſtand upon, form an immenſe triangle.

Thus theſe contrivances ſerve gradually to abſtract or draw off the ideas conſtituting triangularity from all others, which any particular ſubſtance or ſpace of that form may exhibit: and if I can ſucceed in making the ſeparation clean and compleat, he will then have the ſpecific idea of a triangle containing neither the idea of rectangular, equilateral, iſoſceles, nor obtuſe, neither ſoftneſs nor hardneſs, neither ſolidity nor empty ſpace,

yet

yet compatible and connectible with any of them.

We have all of us ſome of thoſe abſtract or general ideas, which we uſe in our daily tranſactions with one another; they anſwer our occaſions, nor could the buſineſs of life go on without them: but in the hurry of buſineſs or currency of common converſation, it is not to be ſuppoſed that we have the particular ſubjects, whereto our ideas may belong, paſſing continually in review before us. Or to riſe to higher inſtances, a man uſed to it may harangue in public for hours together upon the moſt important matters with great judgement and perſpicuity, ſo as to be readily underſtood by his audience, many of them perhaps perſons of dull capacity and narrow imagination: yet it is not conceivable that he, much leſs they, ſhould draw along in their thoughts a ſucceſſion of repreſentative individuals correſponding reſpectively with all the ſpecific terms employed, in the ſame rapidity wherewith they were ſpoken. Whenever his lordſhip in either houſe had occaſion to mention Prerogative or Liberty of the ſubject, had he always pictured upon his fancy ſome particular exertion of royal authority together with the perſon of the Queen or her miniſter making that exertion? or of a private man with a ſteddy determinate countenance expreſſive

expreſſive of reſolution to diſobey an illegal command? And if he had not thoſe pictures, muſt we pronounce that he did not underſtand himſelf, nor had any idea of what he talked of?

5. Theſe abſtractions furniſh us with another ſet of things which are not ſubſtances: for we ſay juſtice is not the ſame thing as bounty; colour is one thing and ſound another; ſporting is a different thing from poaching, or poaching ſignifies quite a different thing when applied to deſtroying the game and to dreſſing of eggs; prudence and tranquillity of mind are deſirable things; war, famine and peſtilence, dreadfull things; there is ſuch a thing as ſincerity, but no ſuch thing as abſolute certainty among men. Now it is upon this ſort of things only that the diſpute turns, whether they are independent, unproduced and neceſſarily exiſtent: for with regard to ſubſtances I believe all Theiſts now a days agree with the ſoundeſt of them in former days, in holding that there is but one deſerving thoſe epithets, who therefore was called in greek, To On or the Being, and in hebrew, Jehovah or the I AM; but that all other ſubſtances whatever were created, their primary properties aſſigned them, their poſitions, affections, aſſortments

and relations, brought upon them by the provisions of that One or First Cause.

But substances are the only existent things containing in them all other things, which belong to them as modifications, relations and circumstances, begin and end with them, and are so far from being independent on the Almighty, that they depend upon the manner of existing in those substances which depended upon his Will for their existence. For we have seen that the abstract is drawn from the concrete: it is a selection of one or a few ideas exhibited together with others by the concrete; we may think of it apart, but it cannot exist apart, nor without some substance possessing it. For our idea of a thing is not the thing itself: I may think and reason upon motion, when lying a bed in a dark night with every thing quiescent about me; yet will any body say there would have been such a thing as motion if there had been no movable substances ever in Being? I can fancy the chairs dancing about the room spontaneously; but does that give a reality to such a species of movement? Who will think there must be a possible existence of Cyclops, Chimeras and black swans, because writers have had it full in their power to delineate them exactly in prose and poetry?

But

But men of abſtruſe learning are led into miſtakes upon this article, becauſe many of their abſtractions are not drawn immediately from ſubſtances, but from one another; and that by ſeveral gradations of new refinements, ſerving as a channel into others ſtill more ſubtile. Like a wire drawer who takes a little bar of ſilver, forces it thro' the hole of his engine, and by driving it ſucceſſively thro' ſmaller and ſmaller holes, brings it to a fineſs fit for winding round a thread of ſilk. Therefore forgetting the ſteps by which they arrived at an abſtraction, they diſcern no ſource to give it birth, but ſuppoſe it to have an exiſtence of its own independent on every thing elſe. Thus the rules of juſtice are apprehended immutable and unproduced, becauſe you cannot draw them directly from any object before you. If you ſee a man ſit muſing in a chair, you may diſcern his complection, his ſize and all the parts of his human figure, but he exhibits no idea of juſtice in the whole appearance you have to inſpect. Nevertheleſs let us conſider whether the rules of juſtice do not derive from the contemplation of man, for they relate ſolely to his dealings with others: if there was no ſuch thing as juſtice there could be no rules reſpecting it, if there were no tranſactions among mankind there could be neither juſtice nor in-

juſtice, and if there were no men there could be no ſuch tranſactions. Therefore juſtice and the rules of it cannot be older than man, nor perhaps ſo old, for while Adam lived alone there was no room for juſtice. But you ſay there may have been other creatures before him governed by the rules of juſtice: probably there might and in that caſe juſtice was older than man, yet it was not exiſtent before, nor neceſſarily coeval with, the ſubſtances capable of exerciſing it, who might have lived ſome time apart before being brought into one another's company.

6. Well but I might have an idea of juſtice tho' there never had been a race of men to practiſe it: this I much doubt of, for my ideas are all taken from experience of what I have ſeen, and if I had never obſerved a difference in the behaviour of men to one another, I ſhould never have known what juſtice was. Yet this will not ſatisfy, for you urge that now I have gotten the idea I ſhould not loſe it tho' all the men beſides myſelf were annihilated; and the like idea might ſubſiſt elſewhere before there were any creatures to practiſe it, judgements might be paſſed and propoſitions formed concerning it: but there can be no idea of Nothing, therefore juſtice muſt have a real exiſtence diſtinct from every juſt action and the agent performing

forming it. Why, by this logic I can prove there are Chimeras and black swans, for I have a clear idea of them, can pass judgements and form propositions concerning them, as that the Chimera must be a dangerous creature in any country and might eat up all the black swans: but I cannot have an idea of a Nothing, therefore the Chimera and the black swan have a reality and existence independent of every thing else. So you do not perceive that you have changed the state of the question, you do not indeed change the terms but you change the signification belonging to them: for whereas justice before was understood of something without us whereof we might entertain an idea, it now becomes appropriated to the idea itself which possibly may not be conformable to any thing external. Let us then examine whether such idea can subsist independently on any substance.

I have generally employed the word Idea to stand for that state of our internal organs which is the immediate cause of a perception: in this sense it is nothing more than a particular modification of matter and motion, which cannot subsist unless in a fine texture of material organs capable of taking such modification. But oftentimes Idea denotes the very perception of the mind, and in this

conſtruction can have none other reality than that derived from the mind perceiving; for there cannot be a perception without a percipient. Thus in all lights wherein we can conſider juſtice, it has no claim to independency and ſeparate exiſtence: for whether we conceive it to be ſomething external which we can apprehend, it then depends upon the behaviour of creatures among one another exhibiting it to our apprehenſion; or whether we underſtand it of a corporeal idea, it can be no older than the organizations capable of being modified thereinto; or whether we take it for a mental idea, it muſt begin and end with the perception of ſome mind affected therewith.

7. Let us now come to the nature of things, and this very expreſſion might convince us that it cannot be neceſſarily eternal: for ſubſtances are acknowledged to have been created, and we have ſeen that things unſubſtantial depend upon them for their exiſtence: then the nature of both cannot be older than the things themſelves whereof it is the nature. There could not be a human nature before there were men, nor a nature of juſtice before there were agents capable of mutual dealings which might be regulated by the rules of juſtice. But ſo ſhort an anſwer will hardly ſatisfy: we will therefore enquire more

more minutely into the proper import of the word Nature; which is ſomewhat difficult to ſettle becauſe ſo variable in common uſe.

For nature is often placed in contradiſtinction to education, to art, to deſign, to chance, to miracle: and what is currently aſcribed to it upon one occaſion, has a different cauſe aſſigned upon another. Every country fellow makes the diſtinction between natural graſs and clover, nonſuch, or others that are ſown, and between the natural produce of the ground and corn which is the effect of cultivation: yet if a man takes a farm it is natural for him to plow, and ſow, and he depends upon the nature of the ſoil for the growth and goodneſs of his crops. Then again in diſcourſes upon commerce, we count the corn and other fruits raiſed by induſtry among the natural produce of a country, becauſe it is not imported nor manufactured of foreign materials. In diſtempers ſome people truſt to nature for a cure, others ſend for a phyſician in hopes that his ſkill may throw off a burthen ſhe muſt have ſunk under. Yet when corn is gotten from a field where nature would have yielded nothing but weeds, or a dangerous diſeaſe conquered by the cares of a phyſician, nobody reckons theſe in the claſs of ſupernatural events. So the excreſcencies and monſtrous productions found in

plants and animals, are ſometimes ſtiled preternatural and ſometimes the ſports of nature. Therefore nature ſignifies the properties, powers, relations or affections, of the ſubſtances whereto we apply it. It is the nature of oaks to bear acorns, that is, the texture of their parts is ſuch as to render them incapable of yielding peaches, apples or any other crop than what they do. It is the nature of muſtard to bite the tongue, here the term denotes a relation between the ſeed and the member, for if the latter had no ſenſibility the other could not bite. It is the nature of juſtice to ſtop the motions of ſelf-love, that is, ſo far as a man has a ſentiment of juſtice he will ſhape his meaſures thereby, although contrary to his private intereſts or his paſſions. When we ſpeak of the Divine nature we underſtand thereby ſuch Attributes and methods of proceeding as we conceive belonging to that firſt of ſubſtances.

This may account for the changeable meaning of the word, becauſe it muſt unavoidably contain a different ſet of ideas according to the occaſion or particular ſubſtances whereto it is applicable. For in ſpeaking of natural graſs, we regard only the ſpontaneous powers of the ground, which will yield nothing elſe: on mentioning the natural produce of a country, we think of the powers,

materials, for raiſ-
inhabitants have
oreign aid. When
ſe to nature, we
ical circulations
ody: when we
compare them
l agents within
the ſkill of the
Yet whoever
vents, will not
e of God to
ves them ſo
f the facts.
does not ſo
nſubſtantial
we ſay it
rt, which
to begin

extenſive
of pow-
now of
oſtances
rations
o con-
ıveſti-
this
that
l an
gent

agent than Chance: one expreſſes thoſe operations of ſubſtances which are reducible into a ſyſtem, the other thoſe which are wholly uncertain and can be brought under no rule of obſervation. Therefore we talk of the ſtated laws of nature, but the courſes or mazes of fortune; yet theſe mazes may ſometimes gain an entrance among thoſe ſtated laws, when we have found out a clue to them; for the eclipſes and phaſes of the planets, which were anciently eſteemed fortuitous, are now numbered among the regular phenomena of nature; whereas the weather ſtill continues caſual, not that we do not acknowledge it to proceed from natural cauſes, but becauſe no human ſagacity can diſcover thoſe cauſes nor foreſee how they will operate.

Upon the whole it appears that nature is ſomething more abſtracted than thoſe unſubſtantial things treated of in the preceeding ſections, but being ſtill further removed from its original ſource, is harder to be traced thereto; nevertheleſs that it muſt have had a ſource derived either immediately or by their intervention from ſubſtances, and conſequently cannot be independent nor have an exiſtence prior to the ſubſtances giving it riſe. As is implied in thoſe expreſſions, The birth of Nature, and when Chaos is called, The womb of

of nature and perhaps her grave: which though underſtood only of phyſiology, yet metaphyſics and ontology, or the nature of Beings, muſt depend for its eternal or temporary duration upon that of the Beings which are the objects of this ſcience.

8. Nevertheleſs it will be aſked, ſhall we deny God to have had a perfect knowledge of the nature of things before he created them? I cannot undertake to pronounce peremptorily upon the manner of divine intelligence, having none other conception of intelligence than what I can draw from my own manner of thinking; and I will not preſume to ſay that the thoughts of God muſt be juſt ſuch as my thoughts. Therefore if this queſtion were propoſed by an angel I ſhould be dumb, expecting that whatever I could ſay would appear to him the idle roving of one who would needs be talking upon a ſubject above his comprehenſion: but ſince I am diſcourſing only with men, whoſe underſtandings are narrow like my own, the foundations of whoſe knowledge are ſimilar to thoſe I have to build upon, I may be allowed to think them not ſo greatly an overmatch as that I ſhould give up the point without an argument.

Now

Now I obſerve in the firſt place that the queſtion implies a time wherein God was alone without any creation, but on a ſudden began to reſolve upon having a univerſe peopled with perceptive Beings capable of receiving the bleſſings he would pour forth upon them: which ſeems to me inconſiſtent with the principal tenets of the perſons I have to deal with. For if God be good, communicative of happineſs by the neceſſity of his nature, and there were an eternal unproduced nature of things rendering one plan of operation more productive of happineſs than all others, this muſt have prompted, I will not ſay obliged, him to carry that beſt plan into execution immediately as ſoon as he was able, that is, from everlaſting, for his omnipotence never had a beginning; before which there could be no time of ſolitude wherein he might contemplate the preexiſtent nature of not yet exiſtent things.

I remark next that as in the caſe of juſtice taken notice of in § 6, we have now ſhifted the ſence of our term; for this nature antecedent to creation is not a nature of things but the idea of it, and in this ideal ſtate cannot be older than the mind contemplating it. Well but that need not hinder its being eternal becauſe the mind entertaining the idea undoubtedly was ſo. But how does it appear

undoubt-

was eternally en-
e or what expe-
hould require it?
and amuſement
to uphold, no
to adminiſter?
ıappineſs with-
of acting or
ume to talk of
us to proceed
a conſciouſ-
drawn from
among our-
may evince
s is by no
ıt any time
I muſt let
ſcenes oc-
l paſs in-
ınd have
his time
an ideal
his at-
ent af-
ıity of
yields
to the
from
hich

But

But you will ſay it would be blaſphemy to imagine the work of creation gone upon in a hurry without mature conſideration of all the poſſibilities wherein it might be effected, and a ſelection of ſuch method as ſhould appear moſt proper in wiſdom and goodneſs to be choſen. Here again we judge of the All-perfect by ourſelves. When I have ſome important buſineſs to take in hand, my thoughts are cloudy and uncertain at firſt, I deliberate ſucceſſively upon the ſeveral ways wherein I might conduct myſelf, I compare them together, and it is lucky if after running them over a while in my reflection I can at laſt diſcern clearly which is the moſt probable to anſwer my purpoſe. But ſhall I meaſure Omniſcience by my own ſcanty model? ſhall I pronounce that it muſt ſtudy a thouſand years before it can hit upon a perfect plan, and bring all the parts to harmonize and join in perfect ſymmetry with one another? Ought not I rather to believe that when God creates, his acting and his compleat knowledge of the manner moſt expedient to be followed in acting are co-inſtantaneous; and that as he creates with a word ſo he plans with a thought, uſing length of time or proceſs of operation in neither.

9. Yet if ſuch contemplative ſolitude could be demonſtrated eternal, we could not thence pronounce

pronounce it independent and unproduced, but owing to the Will and pleaſure of God, who choſe to employ himſelf that way rather than in the actual exerciſe of his creative power: for to ſuppoſe the contemplation forced upon him involuntarily, would be ſtill building with our ſlender ſcantlings, and judging raſhly of his intelligence by our own. We are paſſive in all our perceptions, they are excited in us by ſomething elſe, moſt probably by the modifications of our mental organs. In ſenſation we know there are external objects operating upon us, and tho' in reflection we do not certainly know what it is that affects us, yet we may know aſſuredly there can be no affection without an action, nor action without an agent, nor agent which is not a ſubſtance: ſo that in our moſt retired meditations there is ſome ſubſtance exhibiting the objective ideas we perceive. Now what ſubſtance was there to act upon the Almighty before the worlds were made? or what agency, what power of exhibiting objective ideas in an unſubſtantial nature of things? Therefore we muſt conclude that God is purely active in the exerciſes of his intelligence as well as of his omnipotence, and that his thoughts are not affections raiſed by ſome object paſſing in review before him: altho' this be a manner of thinki[illegible] above

our conception becauſe beyond all our experience.

Nevertheleſs to ſpeak as a man, and otherwiſe we cannot ſpeak, there is no underſtanding without objects to contemplate, nor any object of knowledge that has not been for ever diſcerned by the Omniſcient: what kind of objects then ſhall we aſſign to the Divine intelligence? Muſt they needs be forms and qualities, genera, ſpecies, modes, eſſences and abſtract natures, poſſibilities of what will never be done, and hypothetic reſults from imaginary premiſſes which never were nor ever will be realized? Here too we are miſled by the neceſſities and weakneſſes of our own faculties. We have frequent occaſion to contemplate, to compare, to aſſort, to unite, to diſtinguiſh, a number of things, more than we can poſſibly bring together within the compaſs of our imagination: therefore we make abſtractions, which are partial ideas more commodious for our graſp. For we have ſeen before that the abſtract is drawn from the concrete: it is a ſhred torn off from the ſubſtances, needfull enough for convenience of carriage in our ſhallow veſſel. Like the woollen drapers book of patterns, which I bring home in my pocket when I would conſult my Serena and my Sparkler upon the colour of a ſuit, becauſe I cannot carry the whole

whole pieces: for if we went down to the ſhop and had the cloths themſelves ſpread before us upon the counter, I ſhould never think of calling for the book of patterns. So if I have any conſiderable purpoſe to effect and the ſure means of compleating it happen by great chance to occur at firſt view, I never trouble my head with the poſſibilities of other meaſures that might be taken, nor ſtand to make hypotheſes of what would enſue had circumſtances been different from thoſe I find. Shall we then fancy thoſe ſhifts neceſſary for the Author of nature and all comprehended therein, becauſe they are neceſſary for us imperfect creatures?

He has a full view of all the men upon earth, of all that ever were or ever ſhall be, ſo has no uſe for the ſpecific idea of man: he knows all the actions of free agents, paſt, preſent and to come, ſo has no need of an abſtract idea of juſtice to paſs a judgement upon them: he diſcerns diſtinctly all the ſubſtances ever created, their operations and affections, ſo wants not an unſubſtantial nature of things for his guidance in the management of them. Therefore, with ſubmiſſion and reverence be it ſpoken, there ſeems a truer regard for his glory in believing that he diſcerns the abſtract ſolely in the concrete produced or to be produced into Being by his own

own power, has no ſpecific ideas or abſtractions of forms and eſſences detached from their ſubſtances, nor ever contemplates an unſubſtantial nature of things, nor thinks of poſſibilities never to be produced into act, nor frames hypothetic propoſitions of what would happen if ſuch or ſuch meaſures were to be taken: for all theſe are expedients rendered neceſſary by our infirmities, which we can with no colour of reaſon aſcribe to him. It is indeed excuſable, becauſe unavoidable, upon many occaſions to ſpeak of his proceedings in a manner conformable to our own, and even to attribute to him human paſſions and affections, ſuch as favour, deteſtation, reſentment, jealouſy, repentance, fondneſs for glory, pleaſure at our obedience or ſollicitude for our welfare; of doing him ſervice, of grieving his holy ſpirit, of our ſincere zealous reſolutions and hearty praiſes caſting up a ſweet ſmelling ſavour before him: but we ought to remember that theſe expreſſions are not adequate to the ſubject nor deſcriptive of his eſſence, but indulgencies only granted in condeſcenſion to our infirmity which has none but groveling ideas to apply to the ſublimeſt of objects.

10. Still there may remain a ſuſpicion of ſomething antecedent, not only directive of intelligence but even reſtrictive of omnipotence: for

for no Will can make a thing be apprehended otherwiſe than it appears, nor underſtand it different from what it is; and there are abſolute impoſſibilities, as that two and two ſhould make five, that the angles of a triangle ſhould not be equal to two right ones, that an agent ſhould at the ſame time be free and impeccable. And here I may call in aid the noble lord before cited, who declares that theſe propoſitions are identical, carrying a ſhow of ſomething profound but really expreſſive of nothing: for to underſtand a thing otherwiſe than it is would be not to underſtand it, therefore to tell me I cannot do ſo is the ſame as ſaying I cannot be ignorant of it when I do underſtand it; but in the caſe of the Supreme Being he directs his own intelligence, for he determines how he ſhall underſtand a thing by making it what it is.

Then the neceſſity urged of two and two making four, carries the face of an operation performed by two and two to produce the new Being Four, together with ſome ſuperiour force reſtraining them from producing any thing elſe, and indeed Product is the technical term among arithmeticians for the ſum found by multiplication: whereas two and two were already the ſame thing with four before our multiplying them together, and differ only in idea according as we conſider

ſider them ſeparated or united. If I had two guineas in my pocket and ſome body pays me two, I now have four; but the guineas were four while in different hands, and you might have truly ſaid there were four guineas in the room before the payment: ſo that to ſay it is impoſſible two and two ſhould make five, is the ſame as ſaying they cannot be any thing elſe than what they are.

In like manner the eſſence of a triangle contains two particulars, The having three angles, and The quantity of their widths added together which is equal to two right angles: for you might eaſily draw lines upon paper making three angles greater or leſs than two right ones, but then thoſe lines will not encloſe a ſpace and conſequently be no triangle. The former of theſe particulars is as obvious as that twice two are four, but the latter is unknown to many perſons; and thoſe who do know it were taught by long proceſs of demonſtration, which demonſtration was only a new diſcovery to them of what was really contained in the eſſence of the ſubject. Therefore to urge, that it is impoſſible for any power to make the angles of a triangle unequal to two right ones, amounts to nothing more than that no power can form a triangle which ſhall be no triangle: for tho' the word Impoſſible makes a ſhow of ſome limitation

limitation by antecedent cauſes confining the power to one particular manner of exertion, yet it is here a deluſive ſound without a meaning. Who would think it a limitation upon his powers, to have it proved impoſſible for him to do a thing that ſhall be quite different from what he does? or lament at lying under controul of an uncreated neceſſity, becauſe he cannot write a letter without writing nor walk acroſs the room without walking? For my part I ſhould eſteem it rather a mark of inability and ſubjection, if when I were tired of ſitting ſtill, it were poſſible that I might walk ever ſo faſt and yet continue all the while in the ſedentary poſture become irkſome to me.

The ſame anſwer will do for the impoſſibility of a free agent being impeccable. Thoſe who battle moſt ſtrenuouſly for this tenet are cloudy and fluctuating in their conceptions at firſt, but if after much ſquabbling and ſhifting ground you can diſpell the clouds and duſt they raiſe, ſo as to bring them to ſome determinate ſteddy ſence of their words, you will always find them meaning the ſame thing by Free agency and Peccability: ſo their aſſertion becomes meerly identical, Whatever is peccable muſt be peccable; or as they affect hypothetic propoſitions, If God will give a creature peccability he muſt make

make him peccable, for it is not in the nature of things to do otherwiſe. Now to my apprehenſion free agency and peccability are different: freedom perhaps includes a power of doing wrong, but I underſtand by peccability a liableneſs to do wrong, which two I conceive not only diſtinguiſhable in idea but ſeparable in fact, and think I find ſome few inſtances in myſelf of their being actually ſeparated. I ſeem to have full liberty to burn my wig whenever there is fire or candle near me, yet while I can keep my ſenſes and avoid the frenzy of election or party bumpers, I apprehend myſelf under no hazard of ſuch an idle freak. And I am ſo far from believing God unable to deliver me totally from my peccability without depriving me of my freedom, that I have hope he will actually do it for myſelf in particular, and for countleſs multitudes of my fellow creatures, in ſome future ſtage of our exiſtence whereto he is now preparing us by his laws of nature and courſes of Providence in this ſublunary ſtage.

11. Nevertheleſs ſuppoſing an unalterable nature of things, this can be no ſure ground of our reaſonings, becauſe we can never be ſure of apprehending it exactly: for ſuch nature muſt continue always one and the ſame, but our abſtract ideas notoriouſly fluctuate in our thoughts and vary from thoſe of other people.

people. We have all of us ſome idea of juſtice, yet are perpetually doubtfull whether particular actions co-incide therewith or not: and no man can fix ſo perfect an idea of that virtue as that he may not afterwards find reaſon to add or relax therefrom. And among various perſons how diſcordant are their notions of juſtice, of honour, of public ſpirit and all other abſtract ideas?

Notwithſtanding all the cares I have beſtowed upon metaphyſics and abſtraction, I find I have not gotten the true idea of perjury; for if I took a transfer of five hundred India to vote at an election and give it back again upon the opening, and on going to the ballot ſhould ſwear the ſaid ſtock was my own property and my name not uſed in truſt for any other, I ſhould think myſelf guilty of perjury: or if I had a thouſand and lent half of it to a friend upon the like terms, I ſhould think this a ſubornation of perjury. But there are much wiſer people, becauſe better ſkilled in the only valuable knowledge, the art of getting money, who ſee there is nothing to reproach oneſelf for in all this. And I ſuppoſe the ſame wiſe people would perceive, tho' I cannot, that there is no harm in ſwearing a man's life away, provided one could get a ſwinging ſum or ſerve a friend or ruin a party by ſo doing. I dare not preſume to argue

the caſe with them, for they would only laugh at my ſimplicity or cry me down for my ſuperſtition. And here I am not ſo ſimple as to be inſenſible of their wiſdom in employing this kind of logic: for a laugh and an outcry have the ſame effect upon the rational faculties as ſtopping one's ears has upon that bodily ſenſe; and I can clearly diſcern that the wiſeſt way can be taken in the nature of things for defending ſome opinions, is to ſtop one's ears againſt whatever can be ſaid in oppoſition to them.

12. Again if there were an abſtract nature of things having a reality ſeparate from the things themſelves, ſo much of it as does not affect the ſubſtances wherewith we have concern would be needleſs to be known by us. What ſhould we be the better or the wiſer for knowing ever ſo accurately the nature of Chimeras, Cyclops or flying Dragons, ſince no ſuch creatures will ever fall in our way? or for underſtanding the abſtract foundations of prudence and good policy among Sylphs and Gnomes, which have no exiſtence elſewhere than in imagination? Neither is it practicable, if it were deſirable, for us to frame an idea of ſuch unoperating nature or any ſingle particular belonging to it: for our ideal knowledge all comes from experience, our moſt refined ſpeculations are nothing more

more than recollections of what has been depoſited in our memory by the operation of ſubſtances, being either external objects or the modifications of our mental organs. We may compound, aſſort, diſunite, and recall them in another order or other company than they entered; we may join things which never appeared together; we may think of a cauſe and its remote effect without that proceſs of operation by which it has always worked it, or annex the idea of a cauſe to effects it does not bring forth, and this way can make fantaſtical compoſitions and romantic events unlike to any thing that nature has ever produced: yet ſtill the materials are all picked out from ſcenes we have actually known exhibited. I have ſeen women, horſes, birds of various plumage, and fiſh, and by collecting ſeveral parts of theſe into one aſſemblage, like flowers tied in a noſegay, can eaſily make up that whimſical figure with which Horace begins his art of poetry. We have known admirals hang out ſignals and by them govern the motions of a fleet: tis but ſlipping out of mind the captains and crews obeying the ſignals, and we ſhall have the ſignals themſelves remaining for the immediate cauſe of the movements in the ſhips; by which example we may learn to fancy a fairy raiſing a magnificent palace at a ſtroke of her wand.

I have ſeen different animals, can recall one of them to mind and immediately diſcard it by ſubſtituting another in its room; by which power I could eaſily fancy an old witch turning herſelf into a tabby cat. And it is obſervable that conjurors of all ſorts uſe certain myſterious words and geſtures, whereby they teach imagination to join cauſes with effects not belonging to them; ſo that magic, witchcraft and conjuration, may be called the habit of culling cauſes and effects well known in experience, but connecting them together in a manner nature never did.

Nor is it unlikely that errors in philoſophy ſhould ſpring from the ſame ſource. Lucretius builds his theory upon the obſervation of motes in a ſun beam, which in general fall perpendicularly, but many of them decline from their line of deſcent at uncertain times in various and uncertain directions; never reflecting what experience might have informed him, that every little motion of the air will give an impulſe to thoſe light bodies: ſo by this lucky omiſſion he ſtruck out his ingenious contrivance for making a world by chance. Our abſtract ideas of ſpecies, forms, eſſences, powers, modes, relations and natures, are only remembrances of what we have noticed in ſubſtances or their operations: but the notice touching upon various points

of

of the ſame object at different times and in different perſons, and imagination being too ſcanty to contain all the ſtores of our remembrance, but having her ſcenes compoſed of ſuch particulars as occur from time to time ſpontaneouſly or can be drawn up by recollection, 'tis no wonder that our notions are imperfect, unſtable, perpetually varying among themſelves and from thoſe of one another. Our moral ideas all bear an ultimate reference to ſatisfaction or happineſs, and have for their object ſuch ſentiments of the mind as, either by themſelves or by the actions they prompt to, make an encreaſe or diminution of happineſs. And hence it comes that they are ſo frequently diſcordant among mankind and fluctuating in each man: for the efficacy of a particular ſentiment, and the conſequences of an action, being infinitely various according to ſituations and circumſtances, it is very difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to fix the eſſence of juſtice, of honour, of piety, of holineſs, and all others of the moral claſs, ſo accurately as that ſomething yet unobſerved or ſlipped out of mind ſhall not cauſe an alteration of ſhape or colour therein. Therefore thoſe ideal natures and eſſences are unfit to be taken for the baſis of knowledge or firſt principles of action: they are good and needfull directions for our conduct both

in

in acting and reaſoning, the ſole means of making paſt experience profitable, but ſo far from being eternal, unproduced and unalterable, that they were the offspring of obſervation upon ſubſtances and operations we have known; and are apt to change, like ſtale meat, ſo far as to become unwholeſome, if locked up long in the ſpeculations of the cloſet. They muſt be frequently brought out into the air of the world, applied to the occurrences paſſing there, and continual endeavours uſed by familiar example, compariſon, diſtinction, freſh obſervation and ſuppoſition of caſes likely to happen, ſo to fix their figures upon the memory as that there may be nothing defective or ſuperfluous, and they may riſe uniform and ſteddy every time they make their appearance in the imagination.

13. The doctrine of an uncreated nature of things ſeems to have gathered ſtrength from a notion of its neceſſity to direct the choice of the Almighty in his creation: for choice muſt be founded on the diſcernment of one thing being preferable to another, which diſcernment does not make the preference, it only finds a preference ſubſiſting before in the object contemplated. But this neceſſity will appear none when we reflect that, as already hinted in the above cited

§ 71. of the laſt chapter, many things muſt have paſſed in the creation for which no direction could be had from an antecedent nature of things. Suppoſing the characters, endowments and offices of all perceptive Beings aſcertained by ſuch nature, which is more than I can pretend to ſay that they were, yet how can that nature allot particular perſons to the ſeveral parts and offices it had made requiſite in the univerſe? What if there muſt be an Archangel to lead forth the hoſts of the Lord to battle, and ſuch a reptile as Ned Search to puzzle his brains with dry ſpeculations that nobody heeds, why was it neceſſary that Michael muſt be the Archangel and I the reptile? Tis true that in my preſent condition I am utterly unfit to cope with the arch rebell, for he would pinch me to nothing with a gripe of his iron claw, and this is owing to the infirmity of that nature which God has given me: but what was Michael better than me before either of us were created? both were then non-entities, undiſtinguiſhable nothings, capable of neither fitneſs nor unfitneſs for any office whatever. Then what antecedent neceſſity ſhould ſo conſtrain omnipotence as that God might not have created me to the powers and intelligence of the Archangel, and made Michael the weak and fallible man of

Adam, I

Adam? The plan of univerſal Providence would ſtill have gone on as it does: Satan would ſtill have been overthrown and the ſame chapters ſtill have been ſcribbled. We may think it requiſite there ſhould be ſucceſſive generations of men from the formation of this earth to its final diſſolution, but what was there in the nature of things to make it requiſite that I and my cotemporaries ſhould be living juſt now, and not have been produced into Being among the antediluvians or reſerved for ſome future century? Had their perſons, with whom we had then exchanged lots, been born in our time with our natural talents, received our education and conſorted with our company, they would have performed their parts juſt as we have done, and the courſe of human affairs would have been nothing different.

Yet why was it neceſſary there muſt be an endleſs variety of creatures with continual gradations of power, intelligence and office among them? was it impoſſible they could all have been made equal and alike? What can we ſee in the antecedent nature of things to make it indiſpenſibly requiſite that there ſhould be Archangels and reptiles, patriarchal ſimplicity and modern refinements? What higher cauſe can we aſſign for theſe things

than

than the Will and good pleaſure of the Creator?

If there be any rule of direction which we cannot ſeparate from our idea of God, it is that of goodneſs; for we ſay that God is good by the neceſſity of his nature: but goodneſs reſpects only the happineſs beſtowed and production of creatures capable of being made happy; it has no concern with the manner of making them happy; ſo long as the ſame portion of bleſſing is diſtributed, it gives no preference to one particular method of diſtribution rather than another. What previous fitneſs of things do we diſcover, or what in the nature of goodneſs, that ſhould hinder but that God might have given us the meaſure of happineſs deſigned, by his own continued act without the intervention of ſecond cauſes? was he not able, or would it have been laborious and troubleſome to have done ſo? In this caſe the creatures would have wanted no faculty of activity, for the perceptive alone would have ſufficed; a corporeal world to ſupply them with materials of enjoyment had been needleſs, as likewiſe thoſe wonderfull courſes of Providence producing order therein, nor could there have been room for wiſdom to diſplay herſelf. For the very eſſence of wiſdom lies in the nice adjuſtment of cauſes among one another and to their deſtined

tined effects, ſo that an infinite variety of them ſhall, by many intricate channels and diſcordant operations, bring forth the exact ſeries of events projected. What is done by dint of power, requires no wiſdom to perform it. If I have a bowl in my hand and want it to touch the jack at tother end of the green, the ſhorteſt way would be to carry it thither, but then there is no ſkill in doing this: the ſkill lies in rolling it along the ground ſo that, by taking a compaſs over ſeveral inequalities of the turf, it ſhall reſt at laſt juſt in the ſpot I would have it. Or if there were blocks in the way, that it could not reach the mark unleſs by a paſſage of twenty angles made by touching upon ſo many bowls, he that could make a ſure caſt under theſe circumſtances would ſhow a moſt ſurprizing ſkill. Why then do we take ſo much trouble in rolling our bowls when we might carry them eaſier? The anſwer is obvious: for our diverſion, or perhaps to ſhow our dexterity to ſome byſtander. But ſhall we ſay that God put his hoſt of ſecond cauſes in act, as we go to a game at bowls, for amuſement? or was it to ſhow what he could do?

It may indeed be thought an end worthy aſcribing to him, to manifeſt his glory and his wiſdom to the creatures, but this is becauſe he has ſo conſtituted ſome of his creatures

as

as that the contemplation of his glory and admiration of his wiſdom becomes a principal channel of their happineſs: yet he has provided enjoyments for multitudes of creatures without giving them any capacity of knowing him or his works, and of that ſpecies which he has endued with ſuch capacity, there are many to whom the neceſſary occupations of that ſtation wherein he has placed them, the turbulence of their paſſions and continual action of ſenſible objects around them, has rendered it impracticable to exerciſe their faculties in the extent whereof they are capable. Thus what grounds there are for the diſplay of glory muſt be looked for in the conſtitution and nature given to the creatures on calling them forth into Being, not in any thing prior to their creation: nor can we deviſe any previous neceſſity nor eternal fitneſs, that ſhould determine him to ſatisfy the demands of goodneſs by the long-ſpun contrivances of wiſdom, rather than by the direct operations of power. Since then, if we will needs judge of the Creator by our own ideas, there appears to have been many particulars attending the creation, for which we can form no idea of any direction to be had from a pre-exiſtent abſtract nature of things, we muſt acknowledge that in thoſe particulars he could and did proceed without it, and

from thence may conclude that he might do the ſame in all others belonging to his work.

14. Even goodneſs, that moſt important of all the Attributes to us, ſeems aſcribed too haſtily by many to ſuch an abſtract nature, for they ſay that God is good by the neceſſity of his nature: which expreſſion I have uſed juſt now after their example, tho' without a full underſtanding of the terms, for to my apprehenſion they imply a neceſſity caſting goodneſs upon him involuntarily or making it requiſite for him to act upon that principle; but for my part I will not pretend to ſay how it comes that he is good nor aſſign a cauſe of his being ſo. Men are good becauſe it is their duty, becauſe it will obtain them his favour, becauſe they think it their trueſt intereſt, becauſe they have been led into it by good company, becauſe it is ſoothing to their reflection and grateſull to their moral ſenſe: but I can aſcribe none of thoſe motives, nor any other conceivable by me, to the Almighty.

Goodneſs, you will urge, is an excellence, and all excellencies muſt centre in him. Let us beware that we do not ſlide back again into the notion of things abſtract and unſubſtantial ſubſiſting independently on their ſubſtances: for what are we to underſtand by Excellence? The idea reſults from compa-

riſon

riſon, moſt frequently among us from a compariſon of perſons; we call a man excellent in his way when he far ſurpaſſes others: in this ſence we may ſay without blaſphemy that the excellence of God ſprung from his creation, for a ſole Being can have no excellence becauſe it has nothing to excell. Or if you will apply the term, you might with equal propriety apply its contrary, for while the ſole he was the loweſt as well as the moſt excellent of Beings. Therefore when he had made a multitude of creatures far inferiour to himſelf, then it was he began to be the moſt excellent.

In the other ſence of excellence it reſts upon a compariſon of things, thoſe being judged the moſt excellent which are moſt advantageous or conduce to the moſt excellent purpoſes, that is, ſuch as yield the largeſt income of happineſs. 'Tis true, goodneſs placed in this light muſt appear the higheſt excellence, becauſe that alone gives us an intereſt in omnipotence, omniſcience and infinite wiſdom, which without it would become objects of meer ſpeculation or perhaps of dread and horror. But then it is an excellence relatively to us, and if we think to encreaſe it by our prayers, oblations and rectitude of conduct, we ſhall do well as being the moſt excellent purpoſe we can drive at: yet this does not

prove

prove it an excellence to him, nor fixed upon him by the neceſſity of his nature. If a man have talents and a diſpoſition of mind highly beneficial to the public, tho' productive of nothing but inceſſant cares and trouble to himſelf, we think him an excellent perſon, and he may think it himſelf an excellent poſſeſſion, and why? either becauſe of the ſatisfaction of mind redounding therefrom, or more rationally becauſe it is every man's trueſt intereſt to do the moſt good he can. For in that only nature of things which lies within our knowledge, the motive of every action regards ultimately ſome benefit of the agent, either real or fancied; and if there be another nature we know nothing of, we can never take upon us to pronounce what it does or does not require: the known nature of agency manifeſtly does not render an Attribute of goodneſs neceſſary, for what joy, what advantage could accrue to the Almighty from effecting his gracious purpoſe of making creatures to be happy? or how was it better or more excellent for him to be good than to be evil?

But it will be aſked, can I imagine a Deity otherwiſe than good? I frankly own that I cannot, becauſe I feel ſo many effects of bounty in myſelf, and ſee ſo many bleſſings poured daily among the creatures on all ſides around

around me, that I cannot imagine them proceeding from any other than a beneficent, gracious and indulgent power. Thus I diſcover the cauſe by the effects, and reſt contented in the diſcovery without wanting or pretending to look further for a cauſe of that cauſe, which I eſteem the Firſt, thinking myſelf happy there is ſuch a one from under whoſe influence I can never be removed. Nor is my method different with reſpect to the other Attributes and even the Being of a God, for all which I could never yet enter into the force of arguments a priori. I ſee there is a world, and my reaſon convinces me it could not exiſt without a Creator, therefore there is one. I know from experience of works I have ſeen performed, that the world could not be made without power, and can diſcern nothing that ſhould limit or obſtruct that power, therefore the Creator is omnipotent. In this manner I go on inveſtigating the other Attributes by compariſon of cauſes and effects: if at any time I try to throw aſide all my experience together with the obſervations and theorems ſtored in mind therefrom, I find nothing but obſcurity whereon I can neither judge nor reaſon nor argue.

15. What then! do we repreſent God as arbitrary, that it is wholly uncertain in what manner he will deal with us, that he follows

none other guidance in his proceedings than meer Will and pleaſure? Far be it from me to draw this concluſion, nor do I think the premiſſes laid down above will bear it. For arbitrary proceeding is acting with no regard to the condition of the ſubjects acted upon, and ſuch action muſt always be uncertain; but without an antecedent uncreated nature of things I apprehend God does not want a guidance for his proceedings in the ſubſequent nature given to his ſubſtances on making them; and that he follows invariably thoſe rules which he had preſcribed to himſelf by the creation, which laſt opinion I gather from his immutability.

Yet neither can I venture to pronounce him immutable by the neceſſity of his nature, for I can ſee nothing previous that ſhould make it neceſſary, but infer it from the ſteddy regularity obſervable in his laws of viſible nature and courſe of events reſpecting mankind, and from the abſence of all conceivable cauſes which might work a change in him. Men are changeable either from ignorance, which leaves room for new lights perpetually to caſt a new appearance of things upon their judgement; or from imbecillity, rendering them liable to be hurried to and fro againſt their judgement by the ſpontaneous and uncertain impulſe of their paſſions: and I have obſerved

obſerved that in proportion as they can get rid of their ignorance and imbecillity, they grow more and more uniform and ſteddy in their ſentiments and conduct. Therefore being fully aſſured thoſe two cauſes are abſent from God, I ſee no ſhadow of probability for their effects: nor can entertain a ſuſpicion that he may be good and provident to-day but cruel or regardleſs of us to-morrow: that at one time he could look forth upon the works which he had made and behold they were very good, conformable to his liking; but at ſome ſubſequent ſeaſon he might look forth again and behold they were ſtark naught, diſpleaſing and odious in his ſight: that he ſhould chooſe a plan of operation perſevering in it for ſucceſſive ages until at length he changed his mind, departed from his plan and purſued another diametrically oppoſite.

Nevertheleſs we muſt take care to ſettle the proper idea of immutability, which is not inconſiſtent with a variety of action, provided the whole ſcheme of action be laid out upon one plan: for we do not pronounce a man changeable and uncertain becauſe he ſometimes goes to bed and ſometimes gets up, ſometimes ſits down to eat and ſometimes riſes to labour, or ſtudies and uſes exerciſe, meditates alone and diverts himſelf among his friends at different times, if in all thoſe

changes of action he ſtill holds on the ſame tenor of conduct and acts upon the ſame principles throughout. So the meaſures of univerſal government are immutable altho' the diſpenſations made by it are various, ſometimes building up and ſometimes pulling down, ſometimes cheriſhing with ſalubrious influences and ſometimes deſtroying with peſtilence and famine; altho' barbariſm and good polity by turns overſpread the ſeveral countries of the earth; altho' at times we are in pleaſure or pain, in hope or under dejection, gladdened with ſucceſs or vexed with diſappointment. For theſe are various parts making up the ſymmetry of one uniform plan which never varies from itſelf: ſo that the univerſe continues always the ſame but the members of it fluctuate, perpetually changing condition with one another.

16. 'Tis this fluctuation among the members and individuals of an immutable Whole, that occaſions ſo many miſtakes in the doctrine of final cauſes; for our unpiercing optics reaching a very little way into the chain of events around us, we frequently take the means for the end and deceive ourſelves in their bearings and tendencies: but if we could diſcern the final cauſes as they grow in order from one another, there would be no ſurer foundation whereon to build our reaſonings,

ings, nor could there be a ſafer meaſure of our conduct than to exert our little powers in co-operating with them. Thoſe final cauſes are beſt ſought out by a diligent examination into the nature of things, that is, of ſubſtances, their qualities, mutual relations and operations, falling within the compaſs of our notice: whoſe natures muſt of courſe have continuance in proportion to that of the ſubject whereof they are predicated. That there is a nature of the Britiſh conſtitution nobody will deny, nor that it requires the attention of every one who would ſtrike out any meaſures of ſound policy among us, for none that are contrary thereto can ſucceed: but this nature was ſo far from being eternal and unchangeable, that fifteen hundred years ago, before there was a Britiſh conſtitution, it had no Being, ſo could require nothing and direct to nothing: and a little ſmattering in Engliſh hiſtory will manifeſt, that it has received many changes from the Saxon heptarchy to the preſent flouriſhing condition of our American colonies. The abſorption of ſix kingdoms by the ſeventh, the introduction of Papal authority, the Norman conqueſt, the wars of the Barons, the breaking of their power, the reformation, the growth of commerce and naval ſtrength, the Revolution, the very recent diſcovery of repreſentation being confined

fined to perſons having ſome intereſt in elections, have each of them given us a different nature.

Nevertheleſs there may be natures eternal, if the ſubſtances whereon they depend were ſo; and unchangeable tho' the ſubſtances fluctuate into different ſorts of creatures, provided others perpetually ſucceed in their places: for the noble ally whom I have called to my aſſiſtance in this chapter will concur with me in maintaining a diſtinction between eternal and independent or uncreated. We do not deny that God might have created Beings from everlaſting capable of right and wrong in their dealings among one another, in which caſe the fundamental rules of juſtice were eternal and immutable. What tho' there be evident marks of generation in this earth: poſſibly the univerſe never was without a race of men in ſome dirty habitation or other, and then human nature with all the abſtractions belonging to it was eternal. Nor ſhall I ſcruple to admit that God has regard to thoſe natures, making his diſpenſations conformable thereto, ſo that we may ſtile them his guidance: but then it is in the government only, not the creation of the world, whereof they were the production and conſequently could not be the direction. We therefore having nothing better than thoſe natures to

make the baſis of our reaſonings, it would be an unwarrantable preſumption in us to pronounce any thing confidently concerning creation, the manner or cauſes of it; for we never had experience of a creation or any thing previous or preparatory to it, ſo can have no ground whereon to build an hypotheſis. 'Tis enough, and a great matter too, for us if we can diſcern how things are conſtituted; for from thence, as from the only ſource we have acceſs to, may be gathered ſo much knowledge of the Divine nature as is needfull or poſſible for us to attain.

17. I ſhould not have been ſo copious or perhaps tedious upon this abſtruſe ſubject, but that I apprehend it of great importance to ſuch as puſh their thoughts beyond the common extent: for it is of little avail to the vulgar, who ſeek for nothing further than the Will and good pleaſure of God, to account for the conſtitutions of things, the courſe of events befalling among them, the rules of duty or obligations to moral conduct; and in this inſtance are wiſer than the ſpeculative. But a truſt in God is the grand corner ſtone of all Religion, and of all our hopes beyond what this preſent ſublunary ſcene of affairs can afford: therefore it is of the higheſt moment to every perſon to take care that his ſtone lies firm upon ſolid ground,

it ſeems to preſs cloſe thereon, it do not indeed take its ſupport from ſome ſide-props which keep it hollow. We may laudably ſearch into viſible nature to find what is the Will of God, for we may learn ſomething of it from his works; but if when ſo found, our dependence reſts upon any thing elſe, whether in heaven above or earth below, in the wilds of abſtraction or a divine nature ſubſiſting independently on that Will, we ſhall find it fail us in time of need, how fair ſoever it may promiſe during the enthuſiaſm of ſpeculative diſcoveries. For this enthuſiaſm, like the heat of argument, will often give a colour of demonſtration to meer plauſible appearances, ſo beguiling the judgement as to make men miſtake their own ſentiments and perceive not the real ground whereon their perſuaſions ſtand. They think themſelves actuated by a zeal for the divine glory in maintaining that God is good and juſt and wiſe and holy by the neceſſity of his nature; which notion is really ſuggeſted by a ſecret miſtruſt of him. They apprehend their fortunes unſafe in his hands; they feel uneaſy at the thought of lying under his abſolute dominion; they ſuſpect he may deal arbitrarily, unjuſtly and unkindly by them; ſo they want ſome barrier againſt the dangers of unlimited prerogative, which barrier they ſuppoſe

poſe to be had in the antecedent, uncreated, unalterable nature of things keeping him perpetually in order.

But this is a novel doctrine unknown to the ſoundeſt of ancient writers either ſacred or prophane: Pythagoras taught that things were eſtabliſhed, the powers of nature and courſe of events aſcertained, by the oath of Jove: the Scriptures ſpeak of a covenant of God fixing the laws of nature, ſo that day and night, ſeed time and harveſt, ſhould never fail; and repreſent even the ſupernatural interpoſitions therein recorded as made in conſequence of the oath ſworn unto David, and the eternal purpoſe of God before the foundations of the world. Now an oath and a covenant are free and voluntary acts, where there is no higher authority to require the one nor valuable conſideration given to make the other expedient: therefore thoſe could be only figurative expreſſions of the Divine immutability, yet were they thought ſufficient ſecurities without wiſhing or ſeeking for anything further to enforce their performance. Wherefore prudence ſhould incline us to enure our minds to place their confidence upon this ſole ſtable bottom, and to ſatisfy ourſelves of its ſolidity by frequent impartial examination: for whatever better [illegible] flatter our imagination with

in

in the fondneſs of refinement, when diſtreſs or an approaching diſſolution threatens, the fondneſs will ſubſide, our ſupport be withdrawn, and we ſhall remain utterly at a loſs where to find another.

18. If we are fully aſſured that God is good and that he will always continue ſo, what more can we deſire for our dependence? what ſhould we be the better if we could know why he muſt be good? or what addition would it make to our ſecurity, unleſs we entertained a ſuſpicion of the other two? Thoſe two points then it behoves us to take for the principal objects of our attention, examining impartially what evidences there are to convince our judgement of their truth; and then by frequent contemplation of ſuch evidences, ſo to inculcate the reſult upon our minds that it may grow into an habitual ſteddy perſuaſion riſing ſpontaneouſly to the thought in full ſtrength and colour whenever needfull. Actual goodneſs is diſcerned by the preponderancy of enjoyments above the uneaſineſſes open to our obſervance, and the means of preſervation, ſupport, accommodation, relief and comfort, amply provided around: but then we muſt take care to diſtinguiſh between goodneſs and fondneſs or a compliance with every ſudden humour, nor confine our view to ourſelves alone or our ſituation

tuation in the preſent moment, which may happen to contain nothing of enjoyment within its compaſs. And the continuance of goodneſs may be learned from the conſideration that mutability ſprings always from defect or weakneſs; it is owing to ſomething we did not think of before, or ſome unforeſeen deſire we cannot reſiſt: ſtill remembring that very different ſtrokes may compoſe a uniform plan, and a variety of diſpenſations be conſiſtent with an invariableneſs of deſign.

Nor is there a ſmall confirmation of thoſe points to be drawn from the concurrence of all mankind, for an opinion univerſally received may well be preſumed ſtanding upon ſolid grounds although the ſteps whereby it grew from thence ſhould be utterly forgotten. But there is nobody to whoſe ears and underſtanding the very ſuggeſtion of an evil or a changeable Deity would not be ſhocking: and this alone gives riſe to our perplexities upon the origin of evil. For if we could believe a mixture of beneficence and unkindneſs in the Almighty, nothing would be eaſier than to account for whatever happens contrary to our liking from the latter: when diſtreſs falls upon us the anſwer would be ready, it is an unfavourable ſeaſon wherein he chances to be out of humour with us

eſtabliſhment I regard as the oath or covenant of the Creator, and by a figurative expreſſion denoting the Divine immutability, may call it an obligation binding upon God in his character of Governor to adhere inviolably thereto.

Thus there is a nature of things which our univerſal Governor takes for his continual guidance, not independent nor uncreated; antecedent indeed to the meaſures he takes, but ſubſequent to the creation, dependent thereon and created therewith. As much of this nature as we can diſcern, ſo much we may know concerning his future proceedings: and this is the only evidence human reaſon can produce for augurating what ſhall befall us beyond the extent of this preſent life. Hence likewiſe we may gather that there is a final cauſe whereon his views conſtantly terminate, namely, the happineſs of the creatures, to be purſued by ſuch methods as their natures and the circumſtances attending them render neceſſary: which ſeem to require a diſpenſation of evil, but in no proportion to the good and made for ſake of the good, with a provident care that no more ſhould be permitted than requiſite, and that every evil be attended with a far greater profit redundant therefrom. Theſe ſurely are ſufficient grounds of contentment, and of ſuch expectations as

we

has done. If I am aſked why the world was eſtabliſhed in wiſdom and goodneſs, ſecond cauſes employed, the perceptions of ſpirit made dependent on the actions of matter, and a ſprinkling of evil rendred neceſſary; why there was a gradation of creatures, an interruption in the enjoyments allotted them and a peccability in man; I have none other anſwer for all ſuch queſtions than, becauſe it was the Will and good pleaſure of the Creator ſo to order. But on obſerving the manner wherein things are conſtituted, I find the perceptive creatures endowed with activity whereby they are to help themſelves to the enjoyments put within their power, that the apprehenſion of evil has as great a ſhare in the exertion of activity as the deſire of good, that ſince, as obſerved before, our knowledge of objects lies in the diſcernment of their differences, there would be no ſenſe of good unleſs by compariſon with its contraſt; for it is a common ſaying that we know not the value of bleſſings until they are taken from us, and the appellation of a tree of knowledge of good and evil implies that Adam did not underſtand what good was before he had experience of evil, therefore there muſt be ſome actual evil interſperſed to raiſe the apprehenſion of danger, but a very ſmall proportion for that purpoſe. This eſtabliſhment

tial truths muſt always be acknowledged as ſoon as ſeen and underſtood. Hence they come by the diſcernment of many things right in themſelves and laudable in themſelves, whoſe merits muſt never be queſtioned: becauſe as in law there is no averring againſt a record, ſo in metaphyſics there is no excepting againſt an eſſential truth intuitively diſcerned, nor can any circumſtance render that wrong which was right in itſelf.

But ſince it happens that mens intuitions vary greatly, and they often diſcern the ſame truth in very different ſhapes and colours, when two of theſe intuitive ſpeculatiſts meet, there is no room for ſober argumentation between them; they can only charge one another with films and bias, blindneſs and obſtinacy, and all muſt proceed in poſitiveneſs, clamour and acrimony. Whereas could they be made ſenſible that, tho' there were an uncreated nature of things, we have not eyes to ſee it, but all our abſtractions are only partial appearances drawn off from the ſubſtances we have been converſant amongſt and their operations, they would then perceive that nothing is right in itſelf or laudable in itſelf, but thoſe expreſſions are applied to ſuch dictates of the moral ſenſe and eſtabliſhed rules as ought to be taken for firſt principles of conduct

conduct and ſentiment by the generality who cannot trace them to their foundations; nevertheleſs a foundation they have, and were made laudable and right by their tendency, nearly or remotely, to the intereſts of mankind. This would open a door to ſober enquiry for diſcovering the nature of moral obligations, from the nature of man and ſo much of the nature of God as lies manifeſted in his works; rectifying one another's miſapprehenſions or overſights by examination of what conduces moſt largely to the general or private happineſs, and by what ſeveral means it operates thereto.

And there are other perſons to whom the like conſiderations might prove ſerviceable if they would heed them: for our godly and gifted wholeſale dealers in lectures mimick the metaphyſician without knowing it. Their ſyſtem, like his, lies altogether in abſtract eſſences and things unſubſtantial, ſuch as derivative wickedneſs, ſatisfaction to juſtice, the price paid for the ranſom of ſin, and the like. With them juſtification, ſanctification and imputed merit, are ſomething that may be drawn up by faith, as water by a pump: grace is an unſubſtantial thing transferable from one ſubſtance to another, capable of being contained and conveyed in material elements. Thus, like the conjuror, they join the cauſe

with a very remote effect or with effects not producible by it, and thereby turn religion into a kind of magic and charm. But of thoſe terms ſome were figurative, of common currency among the Jews, which cannot remain intelligible now unleſs tranſlated into a language familiar among ourſelves: and to find a rational ſence in any of them, recourſe muſt be had to the nature of perceptive Beings, the connection between the ſeveral members of the creation and ſeveral ſtages of exiſtence to be paſſed thro', the nature of man, the rational and ſenſitive faculties, the great importance of a well rectified imagination, the efficacy of forms, ceremonies, viſible objects and authority, to give a different caſt and tenour to this faculty.

Nor are the generality among us wholly without their abſtract eſſences and unſubſtantial Beings: for what elſe is that nobility of blood ſuppoſed to run in the veins from father to ſon, exerting itſelf naturally in grandeur of ſentiments? or that liberty called the birth right of every Engliſhman, which he ſucks in with his milk, or draws with his firſt vital air? But nobility of birth is nothing more than the advantages enjoyed from very infancy, of a noble education, noble examples and the converſation of noble company, together with the reſpect paid by the world

ſtra

ſtraining from ſuch meaneſſes as might endanger the loſs of it: for if the young lord be ſuffered to conſort early among huntſmen, gameſters and jockeys, the blood will be found ignoble in his veins. And if we take our notion of liberty from intuitive knowledge without examination by a reference to public order and public happineſs, we ſhall never be able to diſtinguiſh ill nature, envy, petulance and licentiouſneſs, from that ſpirit of liberty for which we of theſe countries ſo juſtly value ourſelves.

CHAP. XXV.

PROVIDENCE.

IN my general introduction I compared the niceties of abſtract learning to Achilles's ſpear, which was ſometimes employed to cure the wounds itſelf had given. It is this ſervice I have attempted to draw from them throughout the preceeding chapter, which, as there hinted, was needleſs for the unhurt, but intended ſolely for the relief of ſuch as have been ſtunned with a blow of the ſpear, in hopes of allaying the [illegible] and confu-

 ſion

ſion of thought thrown upon them thereby. If my endeavours ſhould prove effectual for diſpelling the perplexities concerning the origin of evil, the abſolute eternity of uncreated eſſences and things unſubſtantial, I expect none other benefit than that the healed will accompany me as undiſturbedly as the unwounded along our future progreſs in the examination of the phenomena before us, and trying from thence to inveſtigate that nature of things which was the work of God, not his ſuperior, and which is the oath he has ſworn and covenant he has eſtabliſhed for the perpetual direction of his conduct in the adminiſtration of his immenſe kingdom the Univerſe.

We have already ſeen that the primary properties of ſubſtances are few, but that the great variety of phenomena; which nature exhibits to our view, ariſes from ſecondary qualities reſulting from compoſition. It is now, and has been ever ſince the time of Thales, the received opinion among naturaliſts that all matter is homogeneous, and that the diverſities we find amongſt it are owing to the various forms and combinations whereinto it is aſſorted. The face of the earth apparently derives its features from the ſhape whereinto it is caſt, for it is that makes the vallies and mountains, the capes, promontories and winding ſhores, the bays and gulphs and

and oceans. It contains the ſame quantity of earth and water as when in that ſmooth antediluvian form ſuppoſed by theory Burnet, wherein there was neither mountain, valley, ſea nor ocean. And in the ſmaller productions of nature, it is the form and ſtructure of the ſeed that fits it for producing ſuch a particular plant, and the ſtructure of the plant that cauſes it to bring forth ſuch particular leaves, flowers and fruits, with their ſeveral colours, odours and flavours. Neither do metals, minerals, foſſils and ſoils, nor the elements themſelves, differ any otherwiſe than by their internal contexture. But the form and texture of compounds depend upon the poſition of their parts with reſpect to one another, nor can change without their changing places or ſome of them flying off or new particles acceeding to the maſs. We ſee bodies continually vary their forms, being generated, encreaſing and decaying, ſome by quicker and others by ſlower degrees; where we do not obſerve them grow or decay, we perceive them altered in quality and appearance: and tho' there be ſome ſolid bodies of which we have no remembrance nor evidence of their ever having been otherwiſe than they appear, yet is there reaſon to believe they did not always carry the form they now bear.

2. Therefore every preſent poſition of particles in any compound or collection whatever was generated, but before they came into their preſent order they muſt have ſtood in ſome other poſition with reſpect to one another, whether in different parts of the ſame compound or at a diſtance therefrom: and it was the ſituation they lay in then, together with the proximity and action of other bodies upon them, which brought them into the places they now occupy and generated the form they compoſe. If the particles forming a blade of corn had lain any where elſe than where they did laſt year, either in the earth or the air or the vapours, they would not have come together into that blade: and if a grain of ſand upon the ſhore had been in any other part of the ocean than where it was, it would have received a different impulſe therefrom, and been thrown upon ſome other coaſt. Thus the ſtation which every particle holds in any body, whether animal or vegetable or earthly or elementary or ethereal, and the ſhare it contributes to the form and ſecondary qualities thereof, depend upon the place wherein it ſtood before entring thereinto, but not ſolely; for they depend likewiſe upon the contiguity, force and direction of other particles impelling it into the compound, as alſo upon the ſituation of parts in the compound itſelf turning

turning it different ways or affording it a place of reſt.

But the univerſe having nothing external, the preſent ſtation of all the particles therein muſt reſult from that they had before, together with the quantity and direction of motions among them, which generate the laws of nature and ſo much of the courſes of fortune as are the product of material cauſes. So that the order wherein matter now ſtands arranged depends upon that of the laſt year, this again upon the preceeding, and ſo on without our being able to trace it to the beginning. But tho' we cannot trace out the firſt poſition which matter ever had, we have ſeen reaſon to conclude that all the particles thereof muſt, either in time or from eternity, have received their reſpective ſtations and motions from the Firſt Cauſe: and that whatever motion was then impreſſed thereby, occaſioning mutual impulſes between them, threw them into that order and thoſe combinations which conſtitute the compound bodies we ſee, and give them their form and their qualities. Thus upon any quantity and kind of motion imparted to matter, the changes it will undergo and various aſſortments it will fall into, follow in a neceſſary ſeries until ſome new motion ſhall be impreſſed.

3. But

3. But though every thinking perſon will readily acknowledge the changes of quality, form and poſition, wherein matter and impulſe alone are concerned, to be governed by the laws of neceſſity and to take place preciſely according to the preſence and operation of the cauſes effecting them: yet the ſame cannot be admitted with reſpect to the actions of voluntary agents, which have ſome influence in working alterations among the bodies around them, and a greater in bringing good or evil upon one another. For they do not act by neceſſity but by volition, nor, like matter, barely tranſmit but produce the motion they give, and can ſtop or change the courſe whereinto bodies had been thrown by impulſe. Yet though they do not act neceſſarily, they act exactly in conſequence of certain cauſes: for there are other cauſes beſide motion and impulſe, and another law beſide that of neceſſity to govern the turns of volition. After what has been offered by Mr. Locke and in the ſixth chapter of our firſt volume, there remains no room to imagine a power of indifferency in the mind, or to doubt that ſhe ſteddily purſues ſatisfaction in every motion ſhe makes, exerting her activity from time to time in that way which appears to her moſt eligible, which the judgement repreſents as moſt expedient

pedient or the fancy as moſt agreable upon the preſent occaſion. Thus our actions follow preciſely according to our preſent apprehenſion of things, according to the final and ideal cauſes ſtarting up to our thought; neither can we conceive a created Being excited to voluntary action any other way.

Let us now conſider whence thoſe apprehenſions muſt ariſe, for the mind does not make them for herſelf, it is not her act that cauſes a roſe to appear red, nor three times four to produce twelve, nor virtue to be more laudable than vice: but ſhe is always paſſive in perception, and only diſcerns objects exhibited to her by ſomething elſe. But we have ſhown that the perceptive mind is one uncompounded ſubſtance, therefore that ſomething elſe which exhibits the ideas, can be none other than the corporeal parts of our compoſition, the ſenſitive or mental organs impreſſing different perceptions according to their different modifications: but the modifications of body can ariſe only from the poſition or motion of the particles whereof it conſiſts; and the ſeries of perceptions ſucceeding in ſpirit, muſt depend upon its poſition in a ſet of organs apt to take ſuch particular modifications.

If any man makes a difficulty of conceiving how the perceptions and acts of his mind

can

can follow according to the poſitions of body, let him take up any book to read: one book differs from another only in the poſition of letters combined in different words and expreſſions, yet he will find the train of thought ſpringing up in his mind, as he goes along, run on according to thoſe combinations; and if he reads aloud, his action upon the organs of ſpeech will proceed conformably thereto. In this employment it is the ſatisfaction expectant upon the inſtruction or entertainment he ſhall receive, which carries him thro' the ſeveral ſteps of his reading: and ſo in all his other proceedings, ſome deſire or ſatisfaction prompts him to read the modifications in his ſenſory, and to exert his activity in purſuance of the information they give. But then the action of external objects, paſſing thro' his mental organs, will be ſomewhat varied according to the condition thoſe organs have been left in by other prior objects ſtriking upon them. Therefore if he runs over two or three pages in the middle of a book, he will ſcarce receive the ſame ideas therefrom as he would had he come to them regularly from the beginning, for the little fibres of his organs will take a different poſition according to that they had been put into before. So likewiſe if two perſons read the ſame diſcourſe, 'tis odds but they will ſee the

the matters contained there in different lights; but this is owing to their degrees of ſagacity depending upon their natural conſtitution, or upon the ſtate their imagination has been formerly caſt into by education or experience or ſtudy or converſation. For whether in reading or whatever elſe a man can perform, his action proceeds always according to the notices of external objects or according to the preſent ſcene of ideas in his mind, the deſires, the views, the apprehenſions, the lights, the directions, ſuggeſted by his judgement or his fancy. If we examine to what theſe are owing, we muſt aſcribe them either to mechanical cauſes or to ſome former acts of his own or of other perſons: but then thoſe acts in like manner followed from the ſcene of ideas exhibited to the agent at the time of performing them, and if we trace them backward to the firſt act that ever was done, we ſhall find it terminate in the condition of the ſenſory when exciting the firſt perceptions.

Thus with reſpect to our mental organs as well as the productions of nature, every poſition of their parts giving them their ſecondary qualities of affecting us with ſuch or ſuch perceptions, follows in conſequence of a prior poſition: not indeed always mechanically, for our own acts and thoſe of other

ther people frequently interfere, but when we conſider that thoſe acts were determined by the then ſtate of imagination directing thereto, it will appear that the changes made thereby proceed by as certain rules though not in the ſame manner, that is, not ſolely by mechanical impulſe, as thoſe worked upon one another by bodies. Hence it is manifeſt that the talents, endowments and ſentiments of percipient Beings depend upon the poſition of material particles and the place wherein they lie reſpectively ſtationed among them: and the operations of ſpirit as well as body muſt be referred originally to the power and direction of the Firſt Cauſe.

4. As for thoſe who hold that the materials of their knowledge lie within the mind itſelf, I know not how they avoid making it conſiſt of parts, one wherein the ideas compoſing their knowledge lie dormant and unperceived, until the other fetches them forth by contemplation and recollection; nor what ſtuff they conceive the ideas to be made of, which remain in the mind for long intervals without her diſcerning them. But whatever their notions may be upon this article, I ſuppoſe they will hardly deny that the knowledge they have was either born with them or acquired ſince their birth: what was born with them was given by that Power

Power which gave them their Being, and what was acquired they gained either by their own ſagacity and experience or by the inſtruction and converſation of others. Their ſagacity or aptneſs for making improvement, and the opportunities of their experience, muſt have been furniſhed by nature or external cauſes; and what they learned from others muſt have been firſt acquired by them from the ſame ſources, or received from other inſtructors who gained it in the ſame manner: for inſtruction cannot encreaſe the ſtock of knowledge in the world, but only ſpread it: and whatever is taught, was originally diſcovered by the teacher or ſomebody elſe. I believe it will be allowed that any two men, having exactly the ſame turn of mind, would act alike under the ſame circumſtances: the circumſtances of the caſe muſt be acknowledged to depend upon external cauſes, and their turn of mind was either natural, and then they muſt aſcribe it to the Author of their nature, or effected by ſome prior act of their own, which act muſt likewiſe have depended upon the turn of mind they then had when they performed it: thus turn will follow turn until you come to that they received at their birth.

He muſt have a very peculiar way of thinking who can perſuade himſelf he ſhould have

gained the ſame acquiſitions, had he been deſtitute of all thoſe means of improvement that have been afforded him: and tho' ſome make extraordinary advances in a particular ſcience or profeſſion under great diſadvantages, every one is ready to acknowledge this owing to a happy genius and vigour of mind with which nature had befriended them. But becauſe ſuch perſons work out their improvements by their own induſtry, they take the merit of it to themſelves, forgetting that they were prompted to that induſtry by the eaſe they found in the firſt ſteps of their progreſs, and aſſiſted therein by the greater acuteneſs of their faculties. Thus upon either hypotheſis we may conclude, that the qualifications of free agents whereon their good conduct depends, ſpring from the gifts of nature or means of improvement: all which derive either directly or remotely from that origin which gave the firſt poſition and motion to matter, producing the order and variety we behold upon the face of nature; and which allotted to ſpiritual ſubſtances their reſpective ſtations among the corpuſcles of matter.

5. Having ſatisfied ourſelves that the courſe of things, as well in the natural as moral world, proceeds in a continued ſeries or chain from the operations of the Firſt Cauſe, which is God omniſcient and infinitely wiſe, there needs

needs very little reflection to convince us that this Firſt Cauſe knew not only the poſitions and motions he gave to matter and ſtations of the ſpirits he had created, but likewiſe what changes and productions they would generate by their mutual action upon one another: and if he knew what would reſult from his work, we can as little doubt that he framed it with an intention that it ſhould have that reſult. This choice and adjuſtment of the proper cauſes to work their deſtined effects, we call Providence: for as a man provides for his children by furniſhing them with the education, portion and other means, which may enable them to live a uſefull and happy life; as every provident perſon, who has any great work to do, will prepare the materials, engage the workmen and labourers, and give the orders neceſſary for bringing it to perfection: ſo whatever God deſigns to produce by the operation of ſecond cauſes, he provides ſufficient agents, gives them the powers, the impulſes and the motives, requiſite exactly to anſwer his purpoſe. If he determines to bring plenty or ſcarcity upon the earth, he diſpoſes the air and the elements in ſuch manner as neceſſarily to produce either: if he reſolves to build up or pull down kingdoms, he raiſes up men with peculiar talents, fitted either for improving the arts of war and

policy or for throwing all things into confuſion. From hence we may gather that the Providence of God is over all his works, and that in the formation of ſentient as well as unſentient natures, he had in view that ſeries of changes and events they would produce, and ordered his whole multitude of ſecond cauſes ſo as to execute that plan of Providence he had in his intention. Which plan contained the order of ſucceſſion we have ſpoken of in ſeveral places before, whereof the ſyſtems and courſes of nature, the diſpenſations of good and evil, the fates and fortunes of men and other ſentient creatures, are the ſeveral parts; which whether it has run on for ever or had a beginning, owed its riſe either from everlaſting or at ſome certain time, to the power and action of the Almighty.

6. But tho' every one who believes God to be the ſole Firſt Cauſe of all things, and not to have formed the world out of uncreated materials capable only of being fabricated in ſuch or ſuch particular manner, will acknowledge that every thing contained in the divine plan falls out according to the divine intention, yet ſome have doubted whether all events that have happened were compriſed within that plan. For as in human affairs if a man lays his meaſures ever ſo compleatly, there will follow other conſequences beſides

thoſe he had in view: when the farmer plows his ground he diſturbs the vermin and inſects, tears up their neſts or deſtroys them without intending it: ſo in the plan of Providence there may lie unimportant events which God cared not whether they ſhould happen or no, not belonging to it but neceſſarily reſulting from the parts deſigned, ſuch as the falling of particular leaves or floating of ſtraws upon the water; and theſe will be abſolutely caſual, as being unforeſeen by any created mind and unthought of by the Divine. Thus the Stoics, as we learn from Cicero, held that God took care of great matters but neglected ſmall ones: my lord Bolingbroke ſeems to have been of the ſame opinion: and if we attend to the common diſcourſes of men concerning chance and fortune, we ſhall be ready to think this the idea generally prevailing amongſt them.

Now if we examine why they entertain this idea, we ſhall find them induced thereto by two conſiderations: one becauſe they look upon little matters as unworthy the notice of God, and eſteem it derogatory from the divine majeſty to ſuppoſe him attentive to the crawlings of an emmet or toſſings of a feather in a tempeſtuous air; the other becauſe the drawing a plan to contain every the minuteſt event without exception, they con-

ceive to lie among the abſolute impoſſibilities and be impracticable even by infinite wiſdom and omniſcience.

But for my part I can ſee nothing unworthy notice in itſelf, the wiſeſt men can attend to the motions of inſects or floating of little bodies in the air, when they have nothing elſe to do; and if at any time they ſcruple attending to trifles, it is to avoid contracting a habit of being drawn off by them from matters of greater importance. For our notice lies confined within a narrow compaſs, we cannot fix our eye upon one object without overlooking others; therefore muſt accuſtom ourſelves to diſregard ſome objects, as being unworthy to engroſs that obſervation we ſhall want for conducting us in affairs of moment. But there is not the like reaſon to deem any thing unworthy the notice of God, unleſs we will ſuppoſe they muſt ſo engroſs his attention as that he will not have enough left to beſtow upon the weightier affairs of his government.

Thus this objection reſolves itſelf into the other, namely, the impoſſibility of all, even the minuteſt, events being compriſed within one plan and calculation: and indeed it muſt be owned an inconceivable thought that ſhall contain every little motion produced and to be produced throughout the univerſe: but ſo

it

it is if we conſider only the riſe and fall of kingdoms, the lives and deaths, ſucceſſes and diſtreſſes of mankind, which whoever will allow God to take care of any thing, muſt admit to lie under his direction; for this alone requires a greater extent of deſign than our imagination can comprehend. But we muſt remember that the Attributes of God are incomprehenſible, his thoughts are not like our thoughts, nor his intelligence like our underſtanding, dependent upon ideas exhibited by our organs which can take only a certain number of modifications, and if we endeavour to introduce more we involve ourſelves in perplexity and confuſion. Whereas God perceives not by organs, but being preſent every where and intelligent every where, we may as well apprehend him to diſcern and direct events throughout the immenſity of ſpace as in any ſingle point of it.

7. The theory of univerſal Providence being thus eſtabliſhed, let us proceed to examine whether there is not evidence of it in the phenomena of nature. If God had thought proper to leave any thing to chance or neceſſity, we cannot imagine otherwiſe than that he would have ſo ordered his plan as that thoſe blind cauſes ſhould not interfere to diſturb or alter it in any part: but in fact we find [illegible]d among one another, that thoſe

thoſe of the greateſt moment often depend upon others we ſhould think the moſt trifling and unworthy regard. The cauſes of dearth and fertility depend upon the vapours and little particles floating about in the air; plague, murrain and many diſtempers, derive from the ſame ſources: therefore thoſe little particles muſt have their commiſſion when and where and in what quantities to flow, or health and ſickneſs, abundance and famine, might overſpread the earth without the knowledge or intention of the Almighty. Winds and weather depend upon ſo many complicated cauſes, the action of the Sun, attraction of the Moon, ſituation of the mountains, exhalations from the ground, that no human ſcience can inveſtigate them: yet how often has the ſcale of victory been turned by a particular wind blowing duſt in the faces of one army? How often has a vanquiſhed fleet been ſaved by a favourable gale wafting them into places of ſecurity? How then can we ſay God giveth victory, unleſs we allow him to take cognizance of every thing conducive thereto? For tho' he gave better conduct to the general and greater vigour to the ſoldiers on one ſide, theſe advantages might be overbalanced by a certain temperature in the air cauſing it to move this way or that.

Perhaps

Perhaps it will be thought enough if the cauſes, operating to produce this temperature, be ſet at work in the groſs, and that it is no matter whether a few more or leſs particles be employed, nor what places or girations be aſſigned to each particle among the whole. For when the farmer ſows his corn, he does not mind the exact number of grains he takes up at each time into his hand, nor whether any two of them fall the tenth of an inch further or nearer to one another. But man acts by the groſs members of his body, to which he gives an impulſe by one operation of his mind; and when he acts upon ſeveral little bodies, the motions they receive depend partly upon their figures, magnitudes and ſituations, which are too numerous and too various for him to obſerve. Whereas God acts not by limbs nor by external ſtroke or pulſion upon the outſide of a maſs, but by actuating the component parts, whereof ſuch and no more receive ſuch and none other impulſe than he impreſſes upon them: for he pervades and is preſent with them all, nor can remain ignorant or inobſervant of what impulſes he gives, or what ſubſequent motions they muſt neceſſarily produce by their mutual action upon one another.

8. If there be any who cannot readily comprehend the force of this argu[redacted]

turn their thoughts to ſuch incidents wherein the ſtructure of particular bodies, and poſition of their parts, manifeſtly give the turn to the event. Men have been killed by the fall of boughs from trees or bricks from buildings as they paſſed under, but had the fibres of the bough, or mortar holding the bricks together, been ever ſo little ſtronger or weaker, or the leaſt particles in either placed otherwiſe, they would have fallen a moment ſooner or later and the lives of the paſſengers been ſaved. Some have been bitten by adders whom they trode upon as they walked along, others deſtroyed by ſwallowing waſps in their liquor: theſe owe their deaths to the minute cauſes which brought the waſp or the adder to that particular ſpot; nor would the general laws of inſtinct guiding thoſe vermin, ſuffice to conduct them unerringly to the very place where their operation was wanted. There have been perſons who have loſt their lives by a gun preſented againſt them in play without knowing of its being loaded, and perhaps after having tried twenty times in vain to let it off; others have been ſaved by a piſtol flaſhing in the pan: here the little particles of ruſt or damps among the powder, muſt be exactly adjuſted to make it take effect at the deſtined inſtant and not before. What is it marks out the paths of bullets

bullets flying about in an engagement? the ſtrength of the powder, the manner of making up the charge, its being cloſer or looſer rammed; and a hairs breadth difference of poſition in the muzzle from whence they were diſcharged, will cauſe them to miſs or to deſtroy: which little difference may ariſe from inequalities of ground the ſoldier ſtands upon, from the manner of his tread, the ſtiffneſs of his cloaths, or what he has eaten or drank a little before. Therefore all theſe minute circumſtances cannot be neglected, even if we will ſuppoſe God only to determine how many ſhall fall in battle that day, but not to care whether John or Thomas make one of the number. How many have come to their ends by ſudden quarrels owing to an inadvertent word, a ſlip of the tongue, or an expreſſion miſunderſtood? What havock and devaſtation do fires make, occaſioned by a ſingle act of forgetfulneſs or heedleſneſs?

Nor is the condition of mens lives leſs under the power of ſlight cauſes than the iſſues of them: the behaviour and diet of a fantaſtic woman cannot but influence the conſtitution and temperament of the child ſhe bears: the giddy careleſsneſs of a nurſe may bring on maims, fractures or diſeaſes, which can never be cured. And how much ſoever we may fancy the number of ſuch accidents regulated

gulated by general laws, yet it can never be aſcertained upon whom the miſchief ſhall fall, without attending to the fancies and other trifling cauſes concurring to each of them. It can ſcarce be doubted that the tenour of every man's conduct and fortune depends very much upon the ſituation wherein-to he was thrown at his birth, the natural endowments and diſpoſitions wherewith he was born, or that theſe depend as much upon the perſons who gave him birth, as theirs did upon thoſe from whom they ſprung: ſo that he might either not have been born at all or have run a very different courſe of life, had his parents or his parents parents been otherwiſe matched. But who can help obſerving what trivial cauſes, what turns of humour, whim and fancy, ſometimes bring people together? an accidental meeting, a ball or an entertainment, may begin the acquaintance, a lucky dreſs, a handſome compliment or a lively expreſſion, firſt engage the notice, or an officious old woman drop a word that ſhall give the preference. Nor do the conſequences of ſuch fortuitous engagements always terminate in the parties or their children or childrens children, but may ſpread wide among the human ſpecies: for they may beget a Genius who ſhall invent a new art or improve ſome uſefull ſcience, or produce

produce peculiar talents fitted to make a politician or a general who ſhall influence the fate of nations. Perhaps the Roman common-wealth might have ſubſiſted longer or the empire been eſtabliſhed in another family, if Ceſar's grandmother had worn a different coloured ribban upon ſuch a certain feſtival.

Thus we ſee the ſcheme of great events can never be ſo ſurely laid but that they may be defeated by little accidents unleſs theſe likewiſe be taken into the plan. And whoever will take pains to contemplate the whole concurrence of cauſes contributing to govern the weightieſt affairs of mankind, will find many inconſiderable ones among them, theſe again depending upon others as minute, and ſo growing ſtill more numerous and complicated the further he goes backward, until perhaps at laſt he be ready to believe with Plato that the whole world is one tiſſue of cauſes and effects, wherein nearly or remotely every thing has an influence upon every thing. From hence we may conclude not only that the young ravens are fed and the lillies of the field arrayed in the glory of Solomon by the Divine proviſion, but that of two ſparrows which are ſold for a farthing not one of them falleth to the ground, not a hair is loſt out of the number upon our heads,

heads, not an atom ſtirs throughout the material world nor a fancy ſtarts up in the imagination of any animal, without the permiſſion or appointment of our heavenly Father.

9. Having ſatisfied ourſelves, as well from reaſon as obſervation of the facts we experience, that the ſmalleſt no leſs than the greateſt events lie under the particular direction of divine Providence, it remains to enquire to what kind of Providence we ſhall aſcribe them: for there are two ſorts, a diſpoſing and interpoſing Providence. For tho' no Theiſt can doubt that God upon the creation ſo diſpoſed his elements and other parts of nature, as that they ſhould bring forth thoſe productions and thoſe changes in the affairs of mankind which he in his wiſdom thought proper to ordain, yet there are many very pious perſons who conceive that the cauſes of particular events were not provided in the original plan, but that his Providence continually watches over all his works, that by his ſecret energy from time to time he alters the motions of corporeal particles, governs the ideas of animals and turns the thoughts of men, to work out his intended purpoſes. Now without denying that the caſe may be ſo, let us conſider whether it neceſſarily muſt be ſo.

The art of man can make a clock that ſhall ſtrike the hours, point out the minutes and perform other more curious movements in their proper order according to the extent of the works: he may ſet up this clock in his houſe for the direction of his family, to give them notice when to go about their particular employments; and thus may lay a plan containing the motions of mechaniſm and actions of free agents. But this plan will be very narrow and imperfect, the clock will want winding up or fall out of repair, his ſervants will not always obey orders punctually, nor his family be always ready at the appointed hour. For he muſt frame his work of ſuch materials as he can get, the weather and other external cauſes will affect it, and the perſons he intends to be directed by it, will have ſchemes and humours of their own which he cannot foreſee nor controul. But the Univerſe having nothing external which might interfere with the play of its wheels, being compoſed of materials prepared by the divine Artiſt with ſuch powers and properties as he pleaſed to aſſign them, if it contained matter alone we might eaſily apprehend how it might go on like an immenſe clock, performing regularly and exactly all the movements projected. Yet when we reflect on the inertneſs of matter and how much motion

tion is conſumed continually by the colliſion and preſſure of bodies, it will appear evident that this clock could not go on for ever without winding up from time to time. Nevertheleſs the experience we have of our own activity in moving our limbs, may perſuade us it is not impoſſible that God may have given his ſpiritual ſubſtance ſufficient power to repair the conſtant decays of motion, and keep the material clockwork regularly wound up. Then again when we reflect that the action of this ſubſtance is alike certain with that of body, having found it to depend either upon the diſpoſition given it upon creation, or the ideas exhibited by modifications of matter thrown into them by the operations of other matter or the acts of free agents determined likewiſe by the ſame two cauſes, we muſt acknowledge this action equally capable with the impulſes of matter of being comprized within the original plan.

And that it might actually be ſo comprized, the infinitude of the Divine intelligence, to which an infinite multitude of objects cannot appear perplexing or intricate, leaves no room to doubt: neither that all events as well minute as important happening either among body or ſpirit, may have followed in a continued ſucceſſion of effects and cauſes from the operation of the Almighty upon them

them at the creation. If we go on to enquire when this operation was performed, we can ſet no limits to the time. Was it ten thouſand years ago? God was omnipotent, good and gracious, to diſperſe happineſs and manifeſt his glory among his creatures before that period. Was it a million of years? Neither then had the divine Attributes their beginning, but were unchangeable and eternal: the ſame power, and the ſame immutable Will to exert it, having ſubſiſted for ever. Therefore there is no abſurdity in imagining that the act of God might have been compleated an eternity ago, that he has ever ſince reſted from his works, and all things have gone on by ſecond cauſes in the order of ſucceſſion eſtabliſhed from everlaſting.

10. On the other hand, an inactive Deity, doing nothing for many ages paſt beſides contemplating the play of his works, ſeems repugnant to our idea of perfection, as that includes omnipotence and an abſolute command over the creatures; which we cannot well apprehend without an actual operation upon them to govern and direct their motions: for power never exerted does to our thinking ſcarce deſerve the name of power. And tho' we cannot ſuppoſe otherwiſe than that God is compleatly happy in himſelf, nor

wants amuſements to paſs his time agreably as we do: yet neither is it incongruous with our notions of him to whom nothing is labour or trouble, that he ſhould not have diſpatched his work once for all to ſolace himſelf ever after in quiet and repoſe, but ſhould have reſerved himſelf ſomething ſtill to do wherein he might find continual employment for his almighty power. Nor does this ſuppoſition derogate from his infinite wiſdom, becauſe it does not repreſent him as making the world imperfect out of neceſſity, for want of ſkill or ability to frame one which ſhould run on for ever without correcting, but by choice, becauſe he ſo enlarged his plan as to take in, not only the motions of matter and actions of ſentient and intelligent creatures, but likewiſe his own immediate acts; which we may ſay were contained among the liſt of ſecond cauſes, ſecond not to any prior agent which might give them force or direction, but to the firſt determination of his Will and to the plan or order of ſucceſſion he laid down from everlaſting. Thus we ſee the doctrine of an interpoſing Providence, or none, equally tenable in theory, and therefore remains a queſtion proper to be determined by evidence of facts and contemplation of nature.

11. Now to conſider firſt the nature of intelligent creatures, to whom a juſt apprehenſion

ſion of their dependence upon their Maker is neceſſary to preſerve them in a happy tenour of mind, and to regulate their conduct with reſpect to one another: if we ſhould imagine God abſtaining from all action ever ſince his creation of all things, tho' we might ſtill adore his excellencies and acknowledge his power, we ſhould apprehend his power already executed and ourſelves as having no further concern therewith; we ſhould look upon him as having abandoned us to the operation of ſecond cauſes, and that upon them only we need fix our attention; we might be apt to live as without a God in the world, eſteeming it matter of meer ſpeculation whether the courſe of nature proceeded originally from him or no. For this reaſon in a former place I have repreſented God under two characters: the Creator dwells in unacceſſible light whereto we cannot draw near, remaining there the diſtant object of our adoration only; but it is the Governor of the world on whom our hope and dependence reſts, to his interpoſing Providence we look up for ſuccour in our diſtreſſes, for a bleſſing upon our endeavours, for a happy turn to our thoughts, and the courſe of outward accidents ſo as that they may operate to our benefit: but without ſome interpoſition God would be utterly loſt to us in his character of Governor. And tho'

we have reaſon to believe there are other underſtandings larger than our own, we cannot conceive any who might not be liable to forget there is a power above them, if they never knew a ſingle inſtance of its having operated among them. Since then God has ſo conſtituted his intelligent creatures as that ſome interpoſition of his power is requiſite to manifeſt itſelf to their obſervation, we may preſume that he has accommodated their capacities to his own manner of proceeding, and that he does ſometimes interpoſe; for elſe he would have given them other faculties capable of entertaining a juſt ſence of his Almighty power and dominion without it.

12. In the next place let us caſt our eye upon the form of this earth we inhabit, which we find tending nearer and nearer every year to a ſmooth ſurface by the higher grounds waſhing into the ſea. I do not pretend to ſay whether it will ever become a perfect level, nor that there may not be ſome rocky parts which no weather can diſſolve, or gravelly ſoils which no rains can drive along: but I do ſay that if the earth had been eternal, all that was capable of being removed muſt have been gone long before this time, nor could there have been any mud left to foul our rivers, but they muſt have run pure as a limpid fountain bubbling from the ground.

What

What quantities of ſoil ſtop up the channels of the Nile! Had the cauſes which brought them thither been always at work, why were they not driven down before the Phenician times, when the ſeven mouths were all navigable? And now they are there, what powers in nature can we diſcover or even conjecture, that ſhall carry them back again to the mountains of Ethiopia from whence they came.

Then to turn our thoughts from the face of this globe to its annual courſe round the Sun and that of the other planets, Sir Iſaac Newton aſſures us that the ether thro' which they paſs, makes ſome tho' a ſmall reſiſtance againſt their progreſs: this reſiſtance, ſmall as it is, muſt by degrees render their orbits more and more eccentric, and conſequently contract their ſhorter diameters. Let us ſuppoſe this contraction to be no more than one inch in a year, yet when we conſider what an inexhauſtible fund of years lies within the compaſs of eternity, if they had moved for ever they muſt have loſt inches enow long ago to reduce them, firſt to the condition of Comets, and afterwards to throw them into the Sun; from whence we know of no power in nature that could ever get them out again. We may fancy exploſions in the Sun which may caſt up huge maſſes from his body as big as our earth, but then if thrown directly up-

wards they would fall down again as ſoon as the impulſe of the ſtroke was ſpent, like a ſtone toſſed up with one's hand: or if thrown obliquely they might then make one giration in a long ellipſis, which would bring them back to the ſpot from whence they ſet out. For a rectilinear or elliptical motion can never be brought into a circular without a tangential impulſe received at the inſtant when the body comes into the circle wherein it is to move; but what force or what cauſe ſhall give it this tangential impulſe we ſhall hunt for in vain throughout all the ſtores of nature. Since then we find that earths and vortices were not eternal, nor yet could be produced by any laws of matter, we muſt conclude that the divine power interpoſed, if never elſe, at leaſt in their formation.

13. Perhaps ſomebody may urge againſt me my own hypotheſis of the mundane ſoul, to whom I have aſcribed power to aſſort the corpuſcles of matter into any combinations, and thereout to form vortices, earths, plants, inſects, brutes and men, and to render the animal organizations ſentient by infuſing into them particles of its own ſubſtance. But let it be remembred that I have all along diſclaimed the uſe of hypotheſis in proof of any doctrine, as believing it too weak a foundation to ſupport a ſuperſtructure alone, and proper

proper only for illuſtration of truths already founded upon ſome more ſolid bottom. Nevertheleſs if any body will apply my hypotheſis to the preſent ſubject, let him take the whole of it intire: for as a complainant in Chancery, who would avail himſelf of the facts diſcovered in an anſwer, muſt take them all together as ſet forth and not pick out thoſe only which ſuit his purpoſe; ſo in arguing from an hypotheſis, it is unfair to proceed upon a part of it ſeparated from the reſt. Now how much ſoever I have ſuppoſed the miniſtry of the mundane ſoul employed in the generation of worlds, I have never ſuppoſed him to enter upon the taſk without an expreſs command and particular plan exhibited to him from above. I have aſſigned the material world for the ſenſory of the mundane ſoul, preſenting ideas thereto by the various modifications of its parts, as our human ſenſories preſent ideas to us by the modifications of our organs: and theſe modifications are made to change partly by the workings of our corporeal mechaniſm and partly by our own voluntary operation. For we find thoughts ſtart up in our minds ſpontaneouſly, and others we call up ourſelves by recollection and ſtudy: many of thoſe ariſing mechanically intrude upon us againſt our Will, and againſt our utmoſt endeavours to

keep them out. But the mundane ſoul being intimately preſent throughout all the parts of his immenſe body and having an abſolute command over it, will in the ordinary courſe of his proceedings ſuffer no modifications to form nor ideas to appear contrary to his liking, nor can any happen unleſs by his own act or by the mutual impulſes of matter conſequent upon the motions he gave it. Nevertheleſs upon extraordinary occaſions when ſome great work is to be entered upon, he will find modifications in his ſenſory which he did not produce by his own action, nor were produced by the neceſſary laws of matter and motion: theſe then he will aſcribe to an immediate operation of the Almighty, as well knowing there are no more than two active powers in nature, God and himſelf.

If we reflect further upon what has been obſerved a few pages before concerning the multitude of ſecond cauſes influencing the affairs of this world, and how intricately they lie involved and complicated among one another, we ſhall be apt to believe them too much for the mundane ſoul to manage, whoſe underſtanding altho' prodigiouſly large is not infinite; and ſhall judge it more likely that he ſhould want direction from time to time for conducting them, than that he ſhould not want the like for the formation of a new world

world and calculation of all events and conſequences to reſult from the combinations and motions he produces therein. Theſe manifeſtations and directions may be looked upon as revelations of the Will of God, and of the meaſures which divine wiſdom judges proper for executing his purpoſes: wherein the mundane ſoul will not be liable to the miſtakes too frequently fallen into by mortals, who take their own fancies and the vapours ariſing mechanically in their brain for divine illuminations; but he having a perfect knowledge of all his own motions, will be able to judge unerringly what are truly ſuch, and what owing to the act of ſome other agent. Thus this firſt of created Beings having manifeſtations of the divine Will and deſigns from time to time, cannot want evidence of a governing and interpoſing Providence: and tho' we have not the like manifeſtations, yet the phenomena which we know cannot have proceeded from an eternal chain of natural cauſes, are an evidence to us that God has interpoſed ſince his orginal creation: and whether we apprehend him to have done this with his own hand, or by his miniſter particularly inſtructed for that purpoſe, either opinion ſufficiently attended to, will keep alive in us juſt ſentiments of his being our Governor and the ſupreme diſpoſer of events.

14. But

14. But how rare or how frequent ſoever we may imagine theſe interpoſitions, we always find the agency of ſecond cauſes employed in bringing forth the deſtined effect. Not that the method of immediate operation could not have been taken, for whoever acknowledges the power and omnipreſence of God, muſt admit that he might have created his ſubſtances periſhable, ſo as to have needed his continual ſupport to uphold them in Being and actuate all their motions, as Biſhop Beveridge and Dean Sherlock have ſuppoſed: or that he might have given his ſentient creatures their portion of happineſs without the intervention of matter or ſpace, by exciting in them a ſucceſſion of perceptions, in the manner Biſhop Berkley has imagined: but experience ſupplies us with no ground to believe he has purſued either of theſe methods. We ſee our pains and our pleaſures brought upon us by the impulſes of matter or dealings of our fellow creatures, and in every diſpenſation there is a chain of natural cauſes lying between the divine act and event produced thereby. The moſt zealous favourer of interpoſition will ſcarce maintain that, when a man is to be deſtroyed by a waſp in his beer, the cup was placed in the window or the caſement thrown open or the waſp driven thither by a ſupernatural force, or the inſect rendred inviſible

that

that the perſon might not diſcern his danger: but at moſt will ſuppoſe a ſecret energy influencing the fancies of the careleſs ſervant who ſet down the liquor, or the man who ſnatches it up, and the ſenſes of the little animal, ſo as that they ſhould all co-operate towards the deſtined event. Thus in every act of interpoſing there is a diſpoſing Providence too, containing a plan of the operations that ſhall infallibly follow upon the impulſes given to the cauſes ſet at work.

It is this manner of proceeding by ſecond cauſes that opens the door to our deliberations and meaſures of conduct: for we cannot penetrate into the ſecret purpoſes of God, nor know when or what immediate acts he will perform, neither can we learn any more of the ſcheme of his Providence than what may be gathered from obſervation of the natural cauſes that are in act. Therefore it behoves us to inveſtigate thoſe cauſes as far as we have ability and opportunity for ſo doing, becauſe from them only we can attain any knowledge of the divine œconomy, which whenever we can diſcover it will prove an unerring guide to our proceedings. The neglect of this duty, and inobſervance of ſecond cauſes, throws men into all the deluſions of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm; for while they [illegible] divine power exerted upon every particular

particular occaſion, they overlook thoſe rules of prudence which God has given for their direction: they deem it unneceſſary even to think for themſelves, expecting an eſpecial guidance for every thing they are to do: which lays them open to the deceit of illuminations, dreams, omens, prodigies and ſuch like trumpery. On the other hand a too cloſe attachment to ſecond cauſes is apt to generate prophaneſs, making men forget the Firſt, and ſubſtitute an undeſigning chance or blind fatality in the room of it. But this can never happen provided they bear in mind that, how far ſoever they may trace the chain, they muſt reſt it in the divine operation at laſt, which whenever exerted they will find accompanied with a diſpoſing Providence directing it in ſuch manner as to produce the whole ſeries of events to follow thereupon. And the longer the chain, the greater number and intricacy of cauſes and effects it muſt contain, and the larger muſt be that plan of diſpoſition which gave beginning to it. Therefore the more a man thinks, he will diſcover natural cauſes lying ſtill further and further behind one another: he will find his idea of interpoſing Providence gradually diminiſh, and that of the diſpoſing proportionably encreaſe.

Therefore let not men condemn one another too haſtily of impiety or ſuperſtition, for

for both are relative to the ſtrength of each perſon's ſight: the philoſopher may entertain ſo high an opinion of infinite wiſdom, as that upon the formation of a world, it might provide for every event that is to happen during the whole period of its continuance; therefore he is not impious in aſſerting that all things ſince have gone on in the courſe of natural cauſes, for his idea of the firſt plan is ſo full as to leave no room for any thing to be interpoſed. This the plain man cannot comprehend, the lines of his view being ſhort, therefore he is not ſuperſtitious in imagining frequent interpoſitions, becauſe without them he cannot underſtand a Providence at all. He may likewiſe find it impoſſible to conceive that every motion of matter and turn of volition ſhould be calculated or foreſeen, but ſuppoſes a watchfull Providence continually attentive to the tendency of ſecond cauſes, interpoſing every day and every hour of the day to correct the errors of chance, and ſecretly turning the ſprings of action the way that wiſdom and goodneſs recommend. And he is excuſable herein, if this be the beſt conception he can form; for it derogates not from his idea of the divine wiſdom and dominion to imagine there ſhould be room left in nature for chance, ſo long as there is a ſuperintending power who can foreſee the irregu-

larit[illegible]

larities of chance time enough to prevent them.

15. Thus how largely ſoever we may aſcribe to interpoſition, or how much ſoever deduct therefrom to add to the diſpoſing Providence, we cannot deny that every natural cauſe we ſee is an effect of ſome prior cauſe, impulſe of impulſe and volition of motives and ideas ſuggeſted to the mind; therefore muſt refer all diſpenſations ultimately to the act of God: and as we cannot imagine him to act without knowing what he does and what will reſult therefrom, we muſt conclude that act to proceed upon a plan and diſpoſition of the cauſes tending to produce the particular conſequences following thereupon. The only difference between the man of common ſence and the ſtudious is concerning the time when the diſpoſition was made, which the one thinks a few days or a few minutes, the other many ages ago, the one frequent and occaſional, the other rare and univerſal; but both acknowledge that nothing ever happens without the permiſſion or appointment of our Almighty and ever vigilant Governor. Since then there was a diſpoſition made at ſome time or other of the cauſes concurring to produce every event, let us try whether we can gather any probable knowledge of the motives inducing to ſuch diſpoſition: for we cannot

cannot conceive a voluntary agent providing for the completion of any work without ſome deſign in view, which is the motive urging him thereto. But we cannot behold God as he is, nor apprehend his manner of proceeding any otherwiſe than by analogy with our own; we being the only intelligent Beings of whom we have any direct knowledge or experience.

Now it has been ſhown in the former volume that our motives may be diſtributed into four claſſes, pleaſure, uſe, honour and neceſſity: theſe then we muſt aſcribe to God, tho' with ſome alteration ſuitable to the difference between his nature and our own. With us pleaſure or ſatisfaction ſtands at the end of every line in our views, 'tis that renders it the object of our deſire, and urges us to purſue it: we perform all our actions, whether conſiderate or inadvertent, becauſe we judge or fancy that we ſhall put ourſelves into a better condition, or gain greater complacence of mind, by doing than omitting them. But pleaſure in this ſence we cannot with any colour of reaſon aſſign as a motive with God, whoſe happineſs we conceive eſſential and invariable, ſo that nothing can be done either to enhance or diminiſh it; neither did he perform any act whether of creation or government to procure a moment's enjoyment

for

for himſelf. We can deſcry no further point in the views of God than the goodneſs of his ſentient creatures, whom he created capable of happineſs and ſhowers down his bleſſings upon them, of his meer bounty and goodneſs, without any obligation engaging or benefit of his own inviting him thereto. But in our ordinary diſcourſes concerning actions whereof we cannot diſcern the motive, we uſually aſcribe them to pleaſure, and ſo we ſay God was pleaſed to create a world and fill it with good, thus pleaſure ſeems again to ſtand at the end of the line: but then it does not carry the ſame ſignification as when applied to ourſelves, it is only a vague term, employed for want of a more adequate, to expreſs that pure bounty which we conceive flowing ſpontaneouſly underived from any higher ſource. Nevertheleſs there may be ſome other Attribute giving birth to goodneſs, altho' we cannot conceive it: at leaſt this much we muſt allow, that there are methods of proceeding taken which require ſome other inducement to the choice of them.

No body can doubt, as we have obſerved before, that God might have given his creatures their portion of happineſs by his own immediate act, without that complicated tiſſue of ſecond cauſes and extenſive ſyſtem of Providence thro' which it is conveyed to them,

them; and I believe few will imagine him ſo confined to the preſent conſtitution of nature as that he could not have contrived ſome other equally productive of good and enjoyment. But goodneſs reſpects only the happineſs imparted, nor caſts a preference between the ſeveral means by which the ſame quantity may be conveyed: when a rich man ſends money to relieve a perſon in diſtreſs, it is kindneſs which prompts him to the deed, but this directs not whether to ſend it in notes or Portugal pieces or Engliſh coin, whether by the ſteward or the butler or the groom, for if each ſpecies be equally convenient and all the ſervants equally truſty, kindneſs is ſatisfied with any of them alike; therefore he muſt have ſome other motive to determine his choice among them. Thus that we receive bleſſings at the hand of God is owing to his goodneſs, but that he chooſes this or that method of communicating them, muſt ariſe from ſome other cauſe: for we cannot ſuppoſe him to proceed without ſome reaſon as well for the manner as the ſubſtance of his proceeding, which reaſon we ſhall try to penetrate in vain, therefore can refer it only to his good pleaſure, the term we uſe for expreſſing every principle of action whereof we cannot diſcern the grounds.

16. Nevertheleſs ſince God has been pleaſed to purſue this method of tranſmitting happineſs to us thro' certain mediums, this gives riſe to the next claſs of motives, thoſe of uſe: for there being many materials and inſtruments without which we could not attain the portion of goodneſs deſigned for us, the proviſions made for preparing them to our hand muſt be deemed as having reſpect to their uſefulneſs. Not but that the divine views are large and piercing, nor ever terminate upon an intermediate point, but look forward to the particular uſes which every thing was intended to ſerve: but our views being ſhort, incapable of ſtretching always to our ultimate end, but reſting upon certain ſtages ſeeming to lie in the way towards it (for we beſtir ourſelves luſtily in accumulating uſefull things, without knowing what we ſhall do with them or whether any benefit ſhall accrue to us therefrom); therefore we are excuſable in conceiving of the divine proceedings after a manner ſuitable to our imagination, that is, by piecemeal. For we cannot follow them to that crop of particular enjoyments they were calculated to produce, but muſt ſtop at the materials prepared, which we apprehend ſerviceable in general to our conveniences and uſes. Thus when we conſider the multitude of various plants with which

which God has cloathed the earth, we regard the admirable contrivance of their fibres and veſſels and ſeveral parts as deſigned for the uſes of the whole, to nouriſh it, to promote its growth and cauſe it to yield fruit; and the curious ſtructure of the ſeed as calculated to produce a plant of its own kind. But many ſeeds periſh without producing any thing, many vegetables tend to the benefit of no living creature we know of, and where we do behold a man receiving benefit or pleaſure from them, we apprehend him applying to his own wants what was provided for the general ſervice. In all theſe caſes we diſcern a wiſdom adapting the means proper to each production, the perfecting whereof is the uſe of thoſe means; and as we ſometimes cannot, and generally do not, carry our thoughts further than that end, we muſt apprehend uſe to be the motive in diſpoſing ſuch cauſes as bring forth the productions of nature.

17. God has given ſome of his creatures a capacity of knowing himſelf, of contemplating his works and adoring his power, his wiſdom, his goodneſs and mercy; and he has ſo ordered his courſes of nature and Providence as to diſplay thoſe excellencies evidently to the conſiderate mind: therefore that diſpoſition whereby things were ſo ordered, we muſt believe made with a view to the mani-

feſtation of his glory. Thus glory bears a conſiderable ſhare among the motives influencing the divine operation. Yet we cannot well imagine glory the ultimate end, for this would imply a want of ſomething external to compleat the happineſs of God, whoſe ſatisfaction might be augmented by becoming the object of adoration to his creatures: beſides it may be preſumed there would be higher capacities and ſtronger manifeſtations among them than we find by experience. But he has ſo conſtituted his intelligent Beings that glorifying and entertaining juſt ſentiments of him contributes more than any thing to fill them with ſatisfaction of mind, to ennoble their views, brighten their proſpects, and inſpire them with a readineſs to promote one another's benefit: therefore is he jealous of his glory as being a principal channel thro' which he conveys his bleſſings to them. If we go to examine why he made this a channel of his bounty, why man alone of all the viſible creation is capable of partaking in the ſtream, why he gave us ſuch and no higher capacities, ſuch and not more glaring evidences of his glory than we have, we can reſolve this into nothing elſe beſide that general cauſe which takes in every unknown principle of action, his good pleaſure. It has been already ſhown in the proper place how in

in our own minds uſe grows out of pleaſure and honour out of uſe, for we are led to deſire things uſefull by their tendency to ſerve our conveniences and pleaſures, and to cultivate a principle of honour by experience of its uſefulneſs to carry us thro' noble and arduous undertakings: but becauſe we cannot carry our views to the laſt conſequences of our proceedings, therefore we reſt them upon uſe or honour as motives of action diſtinct from pleaſure. In like manner when we contemplate the deſigns of Providence, good or happineſs of the creatures is the furtheſt point we can imagine: the all-ſeeing eye of God looks always to this or perhaps beyond, but our eye, not always able to reach ſo far, muſt neceſſarily terminate ſometimes upon uſe or glory, further than which we cannot diſcern a connection. And by obſerving carefully the methods taken to bring forth theſe purpoſes, we may gradually improve our ſence and knowledge of the œconomy of Providence.

18. The fourth claſs of motives, that of neceſſity, ariſes from evil, which we cannot ſuppoſe either man willingly to undergo, or God to inflict, without a view to ſome greater good which could not otherwiſe be obtained: neither is it ever ſent from the fountain of goodneſs unleſs as a neceſſary means to accompliſh ſome gracious purpoſe. But this

neceſſity was not impoſed by any thing external, or by an independent nature of things abſolutely eternal and unalterable, for this would deſtroy the unity of the Firſt Cauſe, but by the Will of God upon his original conſtitution of them at the creation. It were in vain to ſearch for the motives of that Will, for we know very little of him in his character of Creator, nor can pretend to account for his proceedings: not that we may therefore pronounce them unaccountable or arbitrary, but ought rather to believe them grounded on ſubſtantial reaſons to us inſcrutable, as being drawn from Attributes whereof we have not the leaſt knowledge or conception. Yet we may gather from obſervation of what we ſee, that he has eſtabliſhed certain laws which he has rendred unalterable, having confirmed them as it were with an oath or covenant binding even upon himſelf in his government of the world. Among theſe we may reckon the evil ſprinkled over his works, which is ſo interwoven among the good that one cannot be had without the other. It is ſaid that offences muſt needs come, now no body can doubt the Divine power could have prevented them, but then the good which was to be worked out of them muſt have been loſt. It is ſaid likewiſe that God chaſtiſes thoſe whom he favours moſt,

moſt, and tries them with ſufferings and afflictions as gold is tried in the fire: but then that purity which is the reſult of the trial would not have been attained without it. And tho' puniſhment be commonly underſtood as having reſpect only to the paſt, yet when we conſider that a righteous and diſpaſſionate man would never puniſh unleſs for ſake of ſome benefit redounding to the public greater than the hurt brought upon the offender, we ſhall ſcarce imagine otherwiſe of God with whom is mercy as well as juſtice. Therefore whatever evil we find among the diſpenſations of Providence, we may conclude thrown thereinto upon a motive of neceſſity, a neceſſity which God in his character of Creator has impoſed upon himſelf in his character of Governor, by having conſtituted his ſentient creatures in ſuch manner as that happineſs cannot be conveyed to them compleatly unleſs thro' the road of pain and uneaſineſs either in themſelves or others. And neceſſity, conſidered as a motive, always implies ſome advantage beyond; for we never deem it neceſſary to ſubmit to any thing againſt our liking but for procuring ſome benefit or preventing ſome more grievous miſchief; nor can we conceive but that the like view renmotive with the diſpoſer of Wherefore we may look upon

the evils diſperſed among mankind, the helpleſneſs of infancy, infirmities of age, the pains, diſeaſes, diſtreſſes, afflictions, labours, and thoſe inconveniences of life which we do not find turning to our account here, as neceſſary preparations for our better living hereafter, or productive of advantage ſome how or other to higher ſpecies of Beings.

19. For there being one Creator and one Governor of the univerſe, it can ſcarce be doubted that there is one plan of government extending throughout the boundleſs dominion, and regulating the intereſts of all the ſentient creatures inhabiting therein. In what manner thoſe of the inviſible regions ſtand affected by events befalling here below, it would be a vain attempt for us to particularize; but that there is a mutual connection of intereſts between them and the viſible, we have found abundant reaſon in the courſe of this work to believe. Wherefore thoſe phenomena which Lucretius calls the faults of nature, wherewith he ſays ſhe ſo largely abounds, inſtead of proving that the world was not made in wiſdom and goodneſs, may with better reaſon be looked upon as evidences that our heavenly Father has other children to provide for beſides thoſe falling under our cognizance; and that whatever appears wrong or needleſs or waſtefull to us, is neceſſary

ſary for their uſes. I know that ſome good people perſuade themſelves that the courſes of nature and fortune are ordered for the beſt, even with reſpect to the intereſts of man here upon earth, nor could be altered in any ſingle point without endamaging his condition in life ſome way or other: but it would be very hard to make this appear to an unprejudiced obſerver who has not more zeal than knowledge, or to convince him that infinite wiſdom could not have contrived a better world, wherein our days might have paſſed more comfortably and happily than we find them do; nor need we diſturb ourſelves at the difficulty. For my part theſe ſeeming faults, and the vaſt profuſion of ſecond cauſes, whereof many ſerve but little to the uſes of man, are ſo far from being ſtumbling blocks to me, that I look upon them as an earneſt of our future expectations. We have apparent marks enow of a wiſdom diſplayed in this viſible world, to ſatisfy us that the affairs of men and all nature lie under that guidance: therefore I care not how many inſtances may be produced wherein the purpoſes of that wiſdom are fruſtrated or incompleatly anſwered here, becauſe I may reaſonably infer from thence that they are fully compleated elſewhere. Our continuance here is but for a moment in compariſon with the long abode we

we are to make in the inviſible world: therefore there lies our principal concern, and our opinion of its value muſt be heightened by the cares we obſerve beſtowed upon it by infinite wiſdom. But ſince we know that wiſdom does nothing in vain or ſuperfluous, whatever we find ſuperfluous to ourſelves, the vaſt effuſion of light, the boundleſs fields of ether, and many huge maſſes of matter which ſcarce afford us a trifling benefit, muſt be provided for the benefit of thoſe Beings among whom we are to take up our chief reſidence: of which reſidence therefore we have reaſon to think the better, the more errors and ſuperfluities we can find in nature.

20. Nor does animal or rational nature abound leſs in errors than the material: the fooliſh Oſtrich drops her eggs upon the ſand where many of them grow addle and periſh, the ſimple ſheep licks up the autumnal dews hanging upon her paſture which gives a rot to her fleſh, the heedleſs fly obſerves not the cobwebs which entangle her in deſtruction. Birds, beaſts and inſects, overpower, enſnare and lie in wait to prey upon one another; and it is neceſſary they ſhould do ſo to keep their numbers within bounds, for nature produces more of every ſpecies than ſhe is able to maintain. Then to turn our thoughts upon

upon imperial man who boaſts his being the lord of this ſublunary kingdom, obſerve how he runs himſelf continually into vexation, diſappointment and miſchief, by his folly and indiſcretion: dangers hang over him which he cannot diſcern, meaſures eſcape him which would conduce moſt effectually to his purpoſes; if he conſults his reaſon he finds it dark, doubtfull and erroneous, nor knows he half the tendency of his proceedings in matters moſt nearly concerning him; for prudence covers her face from him as with a veil, and truth hides herſelf at the bottom of the well. The honeſt-hearted labour under ſickneſs, diſtreſs, weakneſs and ignorance, ſo that they want ability to do the good they deſire: the wicked poſſeſs riches, power, ſtrength and ſagacity, which they employ wholly in trifles or turn to the detriment of their fellow creatures. Now will any body pretend, or does he think it for the divine glory to aſſert, that infinite wiſdom could not have given his animals a compleater inſtinct to warn them againſt every thing tending to their damage, could not have formed thoſe of the carnivorous kind ſo as that they might have been nouriſhed by vegetables, nor have adapted his cauſes of generation to the proviſions made for their ſuſtenance, nor have given man a more piercing underſtanding to penetrate th

into his trueſt intereſts, nor have diſpenſed his talents where they would have been moſt uſefull. If then we acknowledge theſe things ordered by a wiſe and beneficent Providence, yet that they do not anſwer the purpoſes of beneficence in this viſible world, we muſt needs conclude them calculated for ſome benefit to the inviſible: and in this light we may regard them as beneficial to ourſelves, we having a concern in proviſions beneficial to that community whereof we hope one day to be members. Theſe conſiderations I think may perſuade us that the departed ſpirits do not reſide in empty ſpaces wholly detached from the material univerſe, whereof they remain meer ſpectators only, ſpending their eternity in hymns expreſſive of their admiration, or at moſt praying for us now and then to the throne of glory: but that this mighty fabric we inhabit, together with the tranſactions and events among men and animals, ſerve to ſome uſes of theirs, and furniſh them with employment for exerting their activity in obedience to the Will of God. Surely this idea is not unworthy the Majeſty of our almighty and omniſcient Governor: an idea which binds together heaven and earth, the hoſt of ſeparate ſpirits, the diſtant ſtars, the numberleſs planets, the elements of nature, the race of men, the brutes, the reptiles

tiles, the grains of ſand, the particles of air and ether, in one all-comprehenſive plan; wherein nothing ſtands alone, but all the parts connect with one another and all the ſprings contribute to the workings of all the reſt.

21. We know not indeed how to trace out the connection, nor ſcarce to conjecture in what particular manner our little tranſactions, our pleaſures and pains, affect the higher claſſes of Beings, nor yet is it needfull that we ſhould: for God knows how to direct the actions of inferiour creatures to more diſtant and important purpoſes than they are aware of, and gives to every one the ſenſes ſufficient to guide it in acting the part he deſigned it to perform. The bee, when ſhe lays in her honey, thinks nothing of the ſervices it may prove of to man: the ſilk worm ſpins her thread without regard to the fine brocades and tiſſues that he will weave out of it: the horſe puſhes on before the plow to ſecure himſelf from the laſh, nor has any conception of his preparing the ground to bear oats for himſelf or wheat for his maſter: in like manner our reaſon preſents us with ſhort aims and ſcanty proſpects, but God has inſtructed this guide to mark out the ſtages leading to remote purpoſes of his own. Let us then make the beſt uſe of reaſon's candle, for tho' it caſt

light

light only upon a few ſteps juſt before us, we may truſt his Providence for having laid out the path to what length he thinks proper: and while we purſue our own little intereſts prudently, we ſhall without knowing it promote ſome advantage of other Beings to whoſe uſes he has been pleaſed to make us inſtrumental.

22. Our view of Providence muſt be partial and imperfect at beſt, wherefore much of the wiſdom of God will appear fooliſhneſs to man; and ſo does wiſdom always appear to ſuch as have not capacity to diſcern the juſtneſs of her meaſures, nor the ends for which they were purſued: but the more attentively we obſerve the luminous tracts, we ſhall find them ſpread further and further into the dark and exceptionable: and they will quickly open before us an ample field for contemplation. For we may diſcover wheel within wheel, trace an admirable connection between many of them, diſcern an exact adjuſtment of them with each other, and perceive one contrived to ſerve various purpoſes.

It were needleſs for me to undertake what has been better [illegible] before me, I mean, to [illegible] wherein they [illegible] ſtriking to the [illegible] with a [illegible] of the

the elements, the form of this terraqueous globe, the variety of ſoils and foſſils, the diſtribution of rivers; the curious ſtructure of ſeeds and plants, their different qualities adapted reſpectively to the uſes and conveniencies of living creatures; the wonderfull machinery of animals containing within a ſmall compaſs innumerable works ſeverally performing the offices of nutrition, growth, circulation and inſtrumentality of action, yet ſo dexterouſly laid together that the voluntary motions do not interrupt the mechanical; the degrees of ſenſe and inſtinct given to the brute creation, ſufficient to direct them in providing neſts, in chooſing proper food and harbouring places, but not ſufficient to protect them againſt the aſſaults of other creatures who live by their deſtruction; the ſtrength, ſagacity and docility which render them ſerviceable to man, the parts or excreſcencies of their bodies applicable to his uſes, the honey, the wax, the ſilk, the oak-galls and other works of their induſtry, which ſupply him with materials of commerce and accommodations of life.

As to the two faculties of the mind, enabling her to receive ſuch an infinite variety of [illegible]ptions, and to exert her actions upon [illegible] the particles lying within the ſphere [illegible]ſence excluſive [illegible]he reſt, theſe are rather

rather evidences of almighty power than of wiſdom, as being primary properties given to her with her exiſtence by an immediate act, and ſo requiring no diſpoſition of cauſes to produce them. But when we reflect on the human ſenſory, the immediate object of all her perceptions and ſubject of her volition, we muſt acknowledge an admirable contrivance there. Whether this ſenſory be the pineal gland, the anteriour ventricles, the center of the ethereal cobweb, or whatever elſe we may imagine, it is evident from anatomy that the chamber of her reſidence is extremely ſmall: yet within this little chamber, what multitudes of images hang round! Senſations, reflections, combinations, compariſons, diſtinctions, judgements, vocabularies of language, forms of expreſſion, figures of ſpeech, remembrance of facts, faces of our acquaintance, faſhion of things familiar to us, knowledge of common life, profeſſions, arts, ſciences, abſtractions, rules of morality, meaſures of prudence, paſſions, deſires, imaginations, all within this narrow compaſs, yet all ſo nicely diſpoſed as not to cover or obſcure one another. Beſides theſe, within the ſame compaſs are contained the particles ſerving for inſtruments of her activity, connected ſeverally with the other parts of the ſenſory or nerves of the groſs body; and all in ſuch orderly

derly diſpoſition as to lie under command, ſo that ſhe can move any limb, call up any idea, or purſue any train of thinking ſhe pleaſes, without miſtake or diſappointment. A little reflection upon theſe things may ſhow us, that the mental organization is ſtill more wonderfull than the wonderfull mechaniſm of our outward compoſition. And tho' it may be, as we have formerly remarked, that all thoſe images do not exiſt together (for we never have more than a few ideas in our view at one inſtant), but that the ſame parts of our ſenſory are thrown into different modifications by the act of the mind, or workings of our animal circulation, and ſo exhibit ſucceſſively the ſeveral ſtores of our knowledge as wanted, like a ſlate which may have written upon it ſucceſſively all the pages of a large volume: yet when we reflect what multitudes of ſprings muſt be requiſite to produce theſe changes of modification, in that orderly manner and under that command of the mind which we experience, it will rather encreaſe than abate our wonder.

Then if we turn our eyes from the courſes of nature to thoſe of fortune and the diſpoſal of events, we may obſerve how men are caſt upon their ſeveral profeſſions, ſchemes of conduct, places of reſidence and alliances, whereon the colour of their future life depends, by various

cauſes; by their natural temperament, by their education, the company they conſort with, and accidents befalling them: how families riſe to proſperity, flouriſh a while and then wither and fall into oblivion: how kingdoms are formed out of a rude rabble, maintained with various ſucceſſes and broken to pieces: how ſects of Religion ſtart up from ſmall beginnings, poſſeſs the minds of the multitude, force princes to obey their injunctions, and in proceſs of time become neglected and exploded.

Nor can we well fail to diſtinguiſh a Providence reſpecting mankind in general, conducting them thro' the ſtages of infancy, growth and maturity, ſimilar to thoſe of human life. We find them living in the earlieſt ages with great ſimplicity of manners and narrow compaſs of knowledge: when nations were formed they ſcarce had intercourſe unleſs with their next neighbours, the accounts brought them of all the reſt were fabulous and romantic: by degrees arts and ſciences ſprung up among them, and new refinements as well in virtue as vice were the produce of every generation: accidental diſcoveries by private perſons, ſuch as the invention of printing, of gun-powder, of optic glaſſes, of the magnetic needle, have ſpread their influence over a great part of the globe:

the

the growing extent of commerce tends to aſſociate the nations with one another, to communicate cuſtoms, opinions and improvements, to connect them in intereſt, and perhaps in time may unite the world into one community.

Thus we ſee the comprehenſive plan of Providence, which by reaſon of the narrowneſs of our capacities we are forced to conſider by piecemeal, appears to us containing innumerable under-plans relative to the intereſts of particular perſons, of the families or ſocieties whereof they are members, and of the whole human race: each provided with a diſpoſition of ſecond cauſes proper to bring forth the iſſues intended, and ſo admirably adjuſted together as to coincide inſtead of interfering with one another. And as we have already ſhown how much ſmall events may affect the greateſt, all this could not be effected ſurely unleſs not only the motions of bodies, but the ſenſes of animals, the thoughts and actions of men, were comprehended within the plan.

23. But an objection has been raiſed of old againſt the doctrine of all events, as well thoſe depending upon the acts of voluntary agents as upon mechanical cauſes, being directed either by a diſpoſing or interpoſing Providence, as leaving no room for liberty of

Will, for the juſtice of reward or puniſhment, of praiſe or blame, or for the expedience of conſulting upon the meaſures we are about to take. For why need I deliberate on a ſunday morning whether I ſhall go to church or to the tavern, if it be contained in the decree of heaven to which place I ſhall reſort? The Will of God muſt be fulfilled do what I can to obſtruct it, nor would it become me to obſtruct it if I were able: therefore I may be careleſs of my conduct, as well knowing that he has planned out ſuch a courſe of my actions as ſhall conduce to the accompliſhment of his purpoſe. Then if every thing that ſhall happen be comprized within the deſign of Providence, and the cauſes provided which will unavoidably bring it to paſs, what praiſe or reward do I deſerve for taking the better part, what blame or puniſhment for the worſe, ſince either was an event ſettled before-hand which I could not turn aſide? Again, if it depend upon my choice whether to drink or pray, and one of them be pre-determined, there muſt be cauſes in act which will infallibly influence my choice one particular way: therefore I have no liberty of Will, no freedom of choice, nor command of my own determinations, and tho' the ſucceſs be left to my option, yet the option itſelf is not left to me

me to make, but I am confined to that which the cauſes aforeſaid ſhall dictate.

Nor do theſe difficulties lie upon the believers of Providence only, but affect equally the atheiſts of both ſorts, whether Stratonics or Epicureans. The former took Neceſſity for their Firſt cauſe, or rather admitted no Firſt cauſe at all, but held that all events proceeded by a neceſſary conſequence from the cauſes concurring to produce them, which cauſes were produced in like manner by others preceeding, and ſo on in an unbroken chain from all eternity: now whether we ſuppoſe this chain upholden by an intelligent Being or ſelf-ſuſtained, it is all one to our preſent purpoſe, for in either caſe if the acts of voluntary agents follow neceſſarily upon the impulſe of external cauſes, there will be a conſtant fatality upon them utterly ſubverſive of liberty, eſtimation and prudence. Epicurus indeed denied the reality of fate, inſiſting that many things happened which were abſolutely fortuitous: but then he could not get over the argument drawn by his oppoſers from the certainty of either the affirmative or negative of every propoſition that could be uttered concerning what is to come to paſs hereafter, which is applicable to the iſſues of chance as well as [redacted] ceſſity. If you are to throw [redacted]

dependent ſoever the caſt may be upon prior cauſes, yet if you ſay you ſhall throw an ace and I ſay that you will not, one of us is certainly in the right; we know not which indeed, but when the die falls we ſhall know without danger of a miſtake. So if Epicurus in his lifetime had ſaid that on this 14th day of January 1762 it would rain here in the morning and be fair in the afternoon, now the day is ended we may know that he ſpoke a certain truth: but truth cannot be turned into falſehood by any thing ſubſequent, therefore it was impoſſible any other weather ſhould happen than has, becauſe otherwiſe that might have been rendred falſe which we know for certain was once true. Neither could the fact contained in a propoſition, which was true two thouſand years ago, become caſual ever afterwards; for if it was always to come to paſs, as we know it was from the event, it could never have been poſſible that it ſhould not come to paſs, but what was always impoſſible could never lie under the power of any cauſe or option of any agent to have effected.

24. On the other hand men could never be perſuaded out of their liberty, nor prevailed upon to relinquiſh their claim to the command of their own actions, a privilege they feel themſelves poſſeſſed of by every day

day and every moment's experience: ſo this has remained a conſtant topic of debate, both among orthodox and infidels, ever ſince men began to purſue abſtract reaſonings and examine into the nature of action. It ſeems to have been a point too difficult for human reaſon to clear up, and Milton repreſents it as above the reach of the fallen angels tho' ſuperiour to man in ſagacity and penetration: for he ſays many of them ſat on a hill apart retired, and reaſoned high of knowledge, fate, and Will, fixt fate, free will, fore-knowledge abſolute, and found no end in wandring mazes loſt. But tho' mankind too have continually wandered in theſe mazes, they have often taken up their quarters for a while in each particular diviſion of them. For it is obſervable that either ſide of the queſtion has ſpread over large territories and among numbers of people, and has become alternately the received opinion of the age. To ſay nothing of former times, the articles of our Church ſavour ſtrongly of predeſtination, which in the next century was exploded, and freewill bore all the ſway. The Socinians of thoſe days I think aſſerted that human actions were unforeſeen and contingent even to God himſelf, and the orthodox attributed his knowledge of them to [illegible] throughout all futurity [illegible]

knowledge of their cauſes. So his knowledge was not preſcience but direct intuition: and lately the other opinion ſeems to have been creeping in again. Hartley declares expreſsly for the neceſſity of action; Berkley aſcribes all thoſe objects, appearances and changes of ſituation or circumſtance which we conceive the effects of our own conduct, to an immediate operation of the divine power; and Locke had maintained before them, that liberty is as little applicable to the Will as ſquareneſs to virtue or ſwiftneſs to ſleep. This ſhows that both have an intrinſic vigour which, tho' they may lie overwhelmed for a while by unfavourable accidents, enables them to riſe again in their original ſplendour, from whence it may be preſumed that both have ſome ſolid foundation in truth and nature: for as Tully obſerved long ago, time wipes away the inventions of imagination, but confirms the judgements of nature.

And we may remark that the partizans on either ſide remain ſafe while they keep within their own trenches, for the arguments proving that every effect muſt have adequate cauſes to produce it, that all cauſes derive their efficacy originally from the act of God, that he does not act without knowing the iſſues of his proceedings, are invincible: on the other hand the common tranſactions of life, the reſolves

ſolves we daily make, and purſue in our conduct, are evidences that we have a choice and command of our actions to every one who will not diſtruſt his ſenſes and his experience, the only baſis of all our other knowledge. Wherefore the litigants do not endeavour ſo much to invalidate one another's arguments as to overpower them with other arguments they think ſtronger, and the diſpute may be drawn into the following ſyllogiſms, A univerſal Providence diſpoſing all events without exception, leaves no room for freedom, But there is ſuch a Providence, Therefore no freedom: or on the other ſide, There is a freedom of Will, Therefore no ſuch Providence. Thus both parties lay down the ſame Major, without which they would make no ſcruple to admit the Minor aſſumed by their antagoniſts. But the moſt ſober and conſiderate part of mankind, induced by the ſtrong evidences both of freedom and Providence, have foreborn to pronounce them incompatible, the only obſtacle againſt the reception of either: yet look upon their conſiſtency as one of thoſe myſteries which we are forced to admit tho' we cannot explain. Nevertheleſs there have been myſteries in nature which time and induſtry have unravelled, and as there are ſome obſervations we have picked up in the [illegible] work [illegible]hich

which I conceive may looſen ſome of the knots in this intricate ſubject, I ſhall hardly be blamed for making what uſe I can of them, which I purpoſe to do in the following chapter.

CHAP. XXVI.

FREEWILL.

BEHOLD us now arrived at the moſt intricate part of our journey, an impracticable wilderneſs, puzzled with mazes, and perplext with errors, where many mighty have fallen, and many ſagacious loſt their way: for ſhadows, clouds and darkneſs cover it; or what flaſhes of light break out from time to time, preſent the image of truth on oppoſite ſides; the winding paths lead round the diſappointed traveller to the ſpot from whence he ſet out, or involve him in difficulties wherein neither Proteſtant nor Papiſt, neither Divine nor Philoſopher, has yet found an opening, and which the ſacred muſe of Milton pronounced inſuperable, even by the Devil himſelf.

In this dangerous road we may be allowed, with better reaſon than the Poets, to call in ſome

ſome ſuperior power to our aid, but what Muſe, what Spirit, what God, ſhall we invoke? For here are no private tranſactions unſeen by mortal eye, no dreams of Rheſus broken off by the ſleep of death, no ſecrets of nature lying beyond our reach to be diſcovered: we need not dive into the bowels of the earth, nor aſcend to mix among the dances of the planets, nor diſſect the human frame to find all the curious threads of its organization. But our buſineſs lies with the common actions of life, familiar to every one's and every day's experience: we want only to know, whether a man may act freely who makes his choice upon motives ſuggeſted by external objects, whether he may know beforehand what his neighbour will do, or offer inducements which will infallibly prevail on him to one particular manner of behaviour, without infringing upon his liberty. Queſtions that one would think could ſcarce admit of a diſpute; nor do they with common underſtandings, until men of uncommon refinements have, by their abſtractions, ſpun them into a ſence not naturally belonging to them, and introduced a confuſion into their ideas, by an inaccuracy of language. Therefore upon this ſubject I conceive we ſhall have more to do with words than with things, nor find ſo much difficulty in [redacted] the

facts to be taken under conſideration, as the proper import of the expreſſions employed in ſpeaking of them.

Come then thou ſolemn power Philology, pioneer of the abſtruſer Sciences, to prepare the way for their paſſage; enwrap me in thy cloſe-bodied leathern jacket, that I may creep through the brakes and brambles of equivocation without their catching hold of me; lend me thy needle-pointed pencil, that I may trace out the hair-breadth differences of language; aſſiſt me with thy microſcope to diſcern the minute changes of ideas paſſing to and fro among the ſame words, as they change their places in different phraſes.

If any one will follow me while I travel under thy guidance, let him look for other-guiſed entertainment than when beſtriding Pegaſus we bounded along the rapid rays of ſolar or ſtellar light, to viſit the Athenian and Samian Sages, to behold the wonders of the vehicular ſtate, and boundleſs glories of the mundane ſoul.

For thou, Goddeſs, conſorteſt not with the Muſes nor the Genii, the flights of imagination affright thee: figure and ornament are thine abhorrence, for they blend together in wanton aſſemblages thoſe ideas which thou art moſt ſollicitous to keep aſunder: familiar example alone, of all the flowry train, thou

thou admitteſt to ſhed his luſtre upon the print of thy mincing feet, and render the marks of them more eaſily diſcernible to the ſtraining eye. But induſtry, and ſcrupulous exactneſs, are thy conſtant companions; labour and vigilance, thy delight; thorns and briars, the favourite plants of thy garden. Whoever undertakes to accompany thee there muſt prepare himſelf for toil and attention; he muſt obſerve the path exactly in which thou leadeſt him, mark all the outlets on either hand, paſs and repaſs the whole length again and again before he ventures into another turning; that he may fix ſo perfect an idea of it upon his memory, as never to miſtake another ſimilar alley for the ſame.

But ſay, Goddeſs, by what avenue ſhall we enter the wilderneſs? Does not thy methodical prudence direct, that upon every queſtion we ſhould firſt know preciſely the terms concerning which the queſtion is propoſed? Where then can we better begin an inquiry into the Freedom of Action, than by aſcertaining the proper import of freedom?

2. Liberty, ſays Mr. Locke, is a power, and ſo is Will; therefore they cannot be predicated of one another, for it would be abſurd to affirm of a power that it has a power. But with ſubmi[illegible]tho-rity of ſo great a Maſter,

a more complex term than he has made it, and though it includes an idea of power, it contains other ideas beſide. And as I apprehend it to be a negative term implying no more than a denial of reſtraint and force; for when we ſay a man is free, we mean nothing elſe than that there is no hindrance againſt his doing or forbearing what he has a mind; therefore it will be expedient to conſider how we come by the notion of Reſtraint or Force.

We find ourſelves poſſeſſed of ſeveral powers of action, we can walk, or ſpeak, or think, or can let them alone: ſometimes diſeaſes or other accidents deprive us of our powers, and then we can no longer perform the functions of them; but at other times, though we remain poſſeſſed of our powers entire, yet we cannot exert them, by reaſon of ſomething ſtronger counteracting them. Thus a man in the ſtocks has not loſt his power of walking, the vigour of his muſcles is not abated, nor is he leſs able to bear the fatigue of a journey on foot than he was before; nevertheleſs, he cannot walk at all, becauſe the cloſeneſs of the wood reſiſts the motion of his legs, therefore he is under a reſtraint which hinders him from uſing the power nature has given him. So if he be puſhed along by another ſtronger than himſelf, he muſt

muſt move forward whether he will or no; not that he has loſt the natural command of his limbs to put them in motion or keep them at reſt, but becauſe he is under a force greater than he can reſiſt.

Thus Reſtraint is a compariſon between ſome power and an impediment preventing it from performing its proper function, as Force is the like compariſon between the power of forbearance, and ſome external impulſe which renders action neceſſary, but forbearance impracticable; and Liberty denotes the abſence of the other two; for when we pronounce a man free, we underſtand thereby that there is nothing either impelling him to do what he would not, or reſtraining him from doing what he would. So that all three, Reſtraint and Force as well as Liberty, include the idea of Power, nor can either of them ſubſiſt where there is none; for the bars of a priſon are no reſtraint to a paralytic, nor will you give him liberty by unlocking them, neither can you force a man to fly, or a horſe to ſpeak.

We may obſerve further, that Liberty is ſo far from being the ſame thing with Power, that it may be reſtored by the loſs, and leſſened by the acceſſion of it. Were an act of parliament made to prohibit me from going out of London fo[redacted]

month, I ſhould think it a grievous reſtraint upon my liberty; but ſhould I be rendered unable to ſtir abroad by gout or palſy, or ſome other complaint which I could not hope to get rid of in the time, the reſtriction would no longer be ſuch to me, and I ſhould remain as much at liberty, as if the ſtatute had never been made. On the other hand our cloaths are made to fit our bodies, ſo that we can move all our limbs freely, notwithſtanding the many ligatures and coverings wherewith we are enveloped; but ſhould it pleaſe God to cauſe a pair of wings to ſprout out from our ſides, we ſhould find our cloaths a troubleſome reſtraint upon us; and we muſt ſend for our taylors to cut ſlits in them for letting out the wings, in order to reſtore us that liberty we had loſt by the ſuperaddition of a new power.

Hence we ſee that liberty is ſo far from being inapplicable to power, that it is properly applicable to nothing elſe; nor is it an abſurd queſtion to aſk, whether a power be free, for it implies no more than to enquire how ſuch power ſtands circumſtanced with regard to any force or impediment which might compell or obſtruct the exertion of it. And when we apply ſuch queſtions to the agent, they bear a reference always to ſome power he poſſeſſes, therefore

therefore a man may be free and reſtrained at the ſame time with reſpect to different powers of action; for he that is locked faſt in a room may be free to think or ſpeak, though he is not to go abroad; but a power to do ſome particular act cannot be free while conſtrained, nor the contrary.

Indeed there are degrees of freedom, not incompatible with a partial reſtraint, but rather implying it, as when we find ſome impediment obſtructing us, though not ſo great as that we cannot ſurmount it; for a man with heavy jack-boots on can ſtill walk, though not ſo freely and alertly as in a neat pair of ſhoes: ſuch obſtacles do not debar us the uſe of our powers, but render it difficult and laborious, or limit them in compaſs.

3. Let us now caſt back our eye upon the path we have trodden, in order to diſcover what equivocal outlets there may be to miſlead the unwary traveller. We get our idea of power, ſays Mr. Locke, from the changes we ſee made in ſubſtances by one another: therefore the word Power originally and properly denotes a quality or property in ſomething to cauſe thoſe changes, and is ſynonimous with ability, and we have hitherto uſed it in that ſence. But it often carries a larger ſignification, comprehending

other circumſtances beſides ability; ſo that according to the various lights wherein we place it, a man may have power when he has it not; that is, he may have it in one ſence while he wants it in another.

Suppoſe a perſon of full health and vigour bound down in his bed by a multitude of threads wound all over him; another ſeeing him lie motionleſs, but not knowing the occaſion, fancies him ſtruck with ſome ſudden diſtemper that has taken away the uſe of his limbs; he laments his unhappy condition, in being at once deprived of all his powers of action: muſt not we pronounce this complainant miſtaken, for that the man has loſt none of his powers, but they all remain entire as ever, though he cannot uſe them until the ſtrings that tie him down be looſened? If a ſecond perſon comes into the room who takes the caſe differently, aſcribing the man's inactivity to a fit of lazineſs with which he upbraids him, ſhall we not plead in his excuſe, that it is no fault of his that he does not riſe, for that the bandages hold him down ſo tight, he has no power to ſtir either hand or foot?

Thus we ſee that power may be truly affirmed or denied in the ſame inſtance, according to the manner wherein the queſtion is propoſed, or thoughts of the perſon propoſing it;

it; and a man may have ability ſufficient for performing a work, which yet he is not able to do, by reaſon of ſome obſtacle, want of ſome inſtrument or material, or other circumſtance ſtanding in the way.

We may preſume Mr. Locke underſtood Power in this extenſive latitude, when he made it the ſame with Liberty; for where he obſerves that a man on the ſouth ſide of a priſon has power to walk northwards but not ſouthwards, this were not true, if ſpoken of natural ability; for the ſame vigour of limbs which might carry him one way, would ſuffice to carry him any other: therefore if he want power to walk ſouthwards becauſe the walls of the priſon obſtruct his paſſage, the term muſt be ſo conſtrued as to include liberty; and in this ſence it would indeed be as abſurd to aſk, whether a Power be free, as whether Blueneſs be blue, or Hardneſs hard.

4. We may remark further, that Knowledge is often confounded with Power; for ideal cauſes being requiſite to direct us in the choice of proper actions, we can no more proceed without them than we can without ability. If I have a paper in my cuſtody which I have miſlaid, upon being urged to produce it inſtantly, I ſhall be apt [redacted] that it is out of my power [redacted]

K[redacted]

have not the key of the drawer where it lies, nor ſtrength in my fingers to take it out as well as any other paper, but becauſe I know not where to look for it. So if a countryman wants to ſpeak with a perſon living at the further end of the town, he may ſay it is out of his power to find the houſe; not that he wants pliancy in his joints to carry him through all the turnings leading thither as well as any citizen, but becauſe he ſhould loſe his way for want of knowing the right. But this idea does not enter into diſputes concerning freedom, for ignorance is eſteemed a defect of power rather than an abridgement of liberty.

It has been ſhown in Chap. II. of the firſt Volume that what we generally call an Action, is not one, but a ſeries of many actions; and when we go about to do a thing, we proceed to the accompliſhment of it by ſeveral intermediate ſteps, each whereof requires a particular exertion of power to perform it. Now if there ſtand an impediment any where in the way, we cannot do the thing propoſed; nevertheleſs we remain ſtill at liberty to take the ſteps lying on this ſide the impediment, and at all events can uſe our endeavours, how ineffectual ſoever they may prove. Thus if a man be hindered from going to London by floods out in the road, he may yet go up

to

to the edge of the flood without obſtacle: if he be locked into a room, he may puſh againſt the door; and if his fingers be bound round with a pack thread, he may try to expand them, being at full liberty to give his muſcles the inflation proper for ſpreading them open.

It is obſervable likewiſe, that reſtraint is often confounded with impotence, nor can we eaſily avoid doing ſo; for reſtraint being a compariſon between our powers and any thing that might obſtruct their exerciſe, may ceaſe upon their increaſe, or may be generated by a diminution of our powers, rendering that an obſtacle to our motions which was none before. Thus Sampſon, after being ſhorn of his ſtrength, was brought under confinement by the ſame cords which were no infringement of his liberty aforetime, and if they had remained on him untill his hair had grown again, he would have been reſtored to liberty by the return of his ſtrength, without any alteration in the ſtrength of the bandage.

Therefore we pronounce upon the ſame caſe, as being a defect of power or of liberty, according to the light wherein we place it: the laws prohibiting the alienation of church lands, are called ſometimes diſabling, and ſometimes reſtraining ſtatutes; and we ſpeak

indifferently of a man being disabled to go abroad or confined at home by a distemper. But in strictness, the beginning of a fever works no disability, for there is generally then an unusual strength and flow of spirits, so that the patient might do as he did at other times, if it were not for the necessary regard to his health, which is a bar against his stiring out of the house; whereas a palsy does not properly confine, for air and exercise might be wholesome, and nothing hinders you from going abroad, but you are not able, the use of your limbs being suspended by the distemper.

Mr. Locke says, that active power belongs only to spirit: however this be, we certainly conceive it, and in our common discourses speak of it as residing in things inanimate; therefore we apply the terms Force and Restraint when we perceive them acting or moving in a manner different to that we should expect from their natural properties, as we do Liberty, when nothing hinders their operations: we talk of a free air, a pendulum swinging, or a river running freely, where there is no obstruction against their motions; of water being forced upwards by an engine, or a stream confined within its channel, by raising the banks.

Hence

Hence it appears, that the force of inertneſs aſcribed by naturaliſts to matter, and the force of impulſe cauſing its changes of ſtate from motion or reſt to the contrary, does not carry preciſely the ſame ſignification with force in vulgar language; for 'tis the impulſe of gravitation, together with its own inertneſs, or perſeverance in a motion once received, that makes a torrent ruſh violently into the ſea; yet every common man apprehends water to run downwards of itſelf, nor ever eſteems it under a force, unleſs when he ſees it driven upwards by ſome other power, nor under reſtraint, unleſs when ſomething obſtructs the courſe it would naturally take. And though we talk frequently of the force of a torrent, we do not underſtand thereby any force the water itſelf lies under, but that we ſuppoſe it able to put upon whatever may happen to ſtand in its way.

Whoever will examine the language of mankind, may find that we apply expreſſions to bodies which belong properly to our own manner of proceeding; and how well ſoever we know the contrary, ſpeak of them as voluntary agents, exerciſing powers of their own; thus it is ſaid the wind bloweth where it liſteth, and we ſay of water, that it will not mingle with oil, that it will yield to the rarefying action of heat, but will force its

way through the pores of gold rather than bear condenſing by the greateſt preſſure; terms expreſſive of a choice, compliance and reſolution, ſimilar to thoſe exerciſed by man.

Nor do the learned abſtain from the like catachreſis, when they talk of the tendencies and nitencies, the conatus recedendi of bodies, the ſpontaneous or automatic motions of clock-work, or the laws of matter; and even when they abſtract from the ſecondary properties reſulting from compoſition, they ſeem to conceive reſt as the natural ſtate and choice of body which it exerts its power to preſerve itſelf in; as one may gather from their calling the momentum or quantity of motion in any body a force, which conveys an idea ſimilar to that of a man carried along againſt his inclination by ſome impulſe he ſtrives in vain to reſiſt.

5. I take notice of theſe niceties, not ſo much for any benefit they may be of towards determining the preſent queſtion, as for a caution to beware of letting ſuch variations of language lead us aſtray: for the proper and genuine ſignification of freedom being the abſence of all obſtruction which might thwart us in the exerciſe of any power we poſſeſs, we are free when upon employing our power it will take effect; but under reſtraint, when ſomething impedes us in the exerciſe

exercise of our power, so as that although we should exert it, the proper consequence of such exertion would not follow.

Thus a man is at liberty to walk, if upon using his legs they will carry him to the place he purposes; but if there stand any wall or bar in the way, so that with his utmost endeavours he cannot move forwards, then he is not at liberty. And so in all actions we have ability to perform, if they would not ensue upon our efforts, it must be owing to some hindrance which cramps and prevents them from taking effect.

From hence it appears, that Freedom relates to the event of our endeavours, not to the causes of them; for whether any or no inducement prevails on me to walk, I am equally free, provided nothing hinders me from walking if I stand so inclined. For Liberty does not depend on any thing prior to the exercise of my power, but upon what would or would not stand in the way after having exerted it, and therefore is not inconsistent with any antecedent causes or disposition of Providence influencing me to walk; for how much soever they may impell me to go out of the room, I am not at liberty to do it while the door is locked, [redacted] the door is opened I am set at lib[redacted]

much ſoever they may with-hold me from uſing it.

But it will be ſaid, all this may be very true, and yet affects not the caſe under conſideration, as it relates only to freedom of action, concerning which there is no controverſy, not to freedom of Will: for no Arminian will doubt a man's being debarred of his Liberty by ſhutting him up in a goal; nor will the moſt rigid Calviniſt deny, that upon being let looſe he is at liberty to go which way he pleaſes. So the diſpute turns, not upon our freedom to do as we will, but upon our freedom to chooſe out of ſeveral actions in our power: and both ſeem to agree, that whatever act is contained in the plan of Providence muſt be performed, nor can we will the contrary if we would.

6. Before we enter upon the diſcuſſion of this queſtion, it will be neceſſary to underſtand ourſelves in the propoſing it; for men ſeem to me not always very clear in their idea of the term Will, as it ſtands in either branch of the ſentence.

We learn upon Mr. Locke's authority, that we are capable of no more than one determination of the Will at once, and whoever obſerves the motions of the human mind will find her volitions tranſient and momentary; ſhe varies her action perpetually, willing this inſtant

inſtant what ſhe rejects the next; and if ſhe perſeveres for a time in one purpoſe, it is by a train of numerically diſtinct, though ſimilar and correſpondent volitions: therefore to aſk, whether we can will this preſent inſtant, if if we will this preſent inſtant, would be an idle and trifling queſtion; it muſt indeed be anſwered in the affirmative, and ſo muſt every other of the like ſort; for I can walk if I walk, ride if I ride, or do any thing elſe you can name, if I do it. And ſuch hypothetical affirmations may be true of things which categorically propoſed were abſolutely impoſſible; for it is as true, that I can lift the houſe if I lift it, or jump over the moon if I jump over it, as that I can take up a pin if I take it up: ſuch propoſitions are merely identical, making a ſhow of ſomething profound, but adding nothing to our information.

Therefore the queſtion, to mean any thing, muſt relate to different Times or different Wills, and the drift of it be to enquire either, whether by willing a thing now I can cauſe myſelf to will it by and by; or whether if I happen to will oppoſite things at the ſame time, as to buy a coſtly trinket and to ſave my money, I can by one Will controul the other, or by a third Will chooſe which of the two ſhall have the guidance of my conduct.

To

To the firſt of theſe enquiries, one cannot give a direct anſwer, it being notorious by every day's experience, that we do determine upon what we will do beforehand, and many times do it accordingly, but at other times do it not, and that upon two accounts; either becauſe we have changed our mind, or becauſe though we continue in the ſame, we find ſome deſire, or terror, or difficulty, riſe upon us too ſtrong for our reſolution. But changes of mind create no doubts concerning liberty; for nobody imagines that our reſolving upon a thing lays us under a neceſſity of performing it, although good reaſons ſhould occur to the contrary, or our judgement ſhould alter; nor will deny, that how ſtrongly ſoever I have determined to leave London ſeven years hence, I may remain perfectly free all the while to determine otherwiſe whenever I think proper.

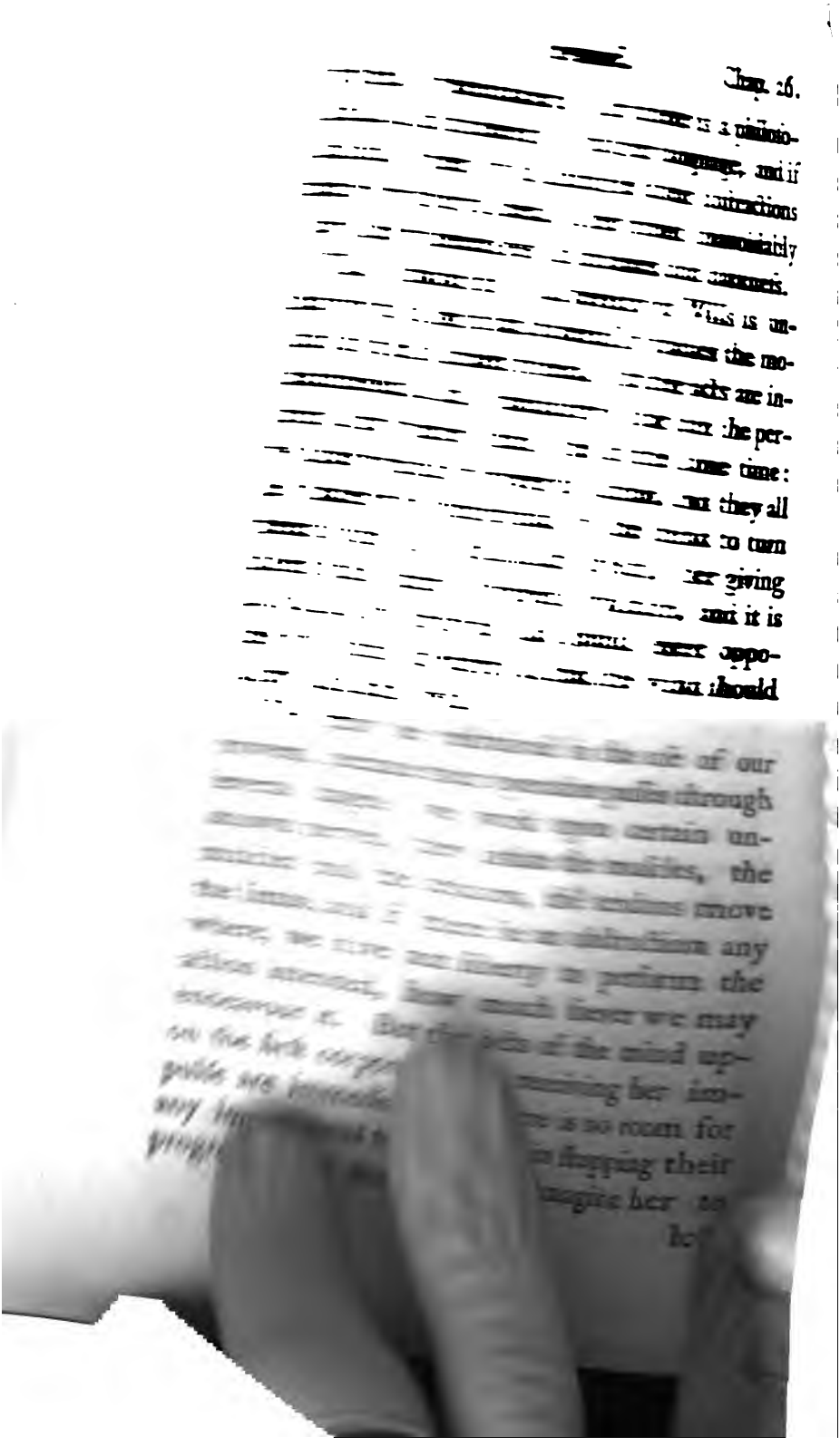
Which by the way ſhows Liberty not incongruous with prior cauſes; for if I do ſomething becauſe I had reſolved upon it beforehand, and this we practiſe every day of our lives, the volition whereby I perform it muſt be acknowledged an effect of my former determination, nevertheleſs will be counted a free act in every body's eſtimation, provided nothing hinders but that I might omit it; therefore if my firſt determination were contained

contained within the plan of Providence, the performance may make a part of that plan without infringement of my liberty. For even ſuppoſing me influenced to reſolve by ſome irreſiſtible grace, or ſupernatural impulſe, though I was not free in making, I am yet free in keeping the reſolution, nor does there need any more than to keep off all ſuggeſtions which might alter my judgement, or temptations which might overpower it, and I ſhall execute what was reſolved on by virtue of the freedom remaining with me.

But when we change our conduct without changing our mind, and do not proſecute what we have in our intention, by reaſon of ſome appetite drawing the contrary way, then diſputes and difficulties ariſe; becauſe we conceive our Will ſtill exerting itſelf, but prevented from taking effect by a ſuperiour force or impediment counter-acting it, which preſents the genuine idea of a want of Liberty.

Thus this queſtion, whether by our preſent Will we may determine what we ſhall will at ſome future time, becomes reduced into that other, whether one Will may controul or confine another coexiſtent Will.

7. And no wonder we find perplexities in examining metaphyſically a queſtion, the terms whereof have no pl[illegible]



loſe her power by the fibre becoming incapable, or being removed out of her reach; but we have ſeen that when power is gone, there is no place either for Liberty or Reſtraint.

Nor let it be aſked, whether the mind be free to determine her own acts; for this implies, that one volition is the conſequence of another, and ſo it may be remotely; but we have ſhown in a former place, that the mind never acts upon herſelf, unleſs by the mediation of motives: for there is no one action of our lives which we do not enter upon through ſome motive of judgement, or inclination, or preſent fancy; and even if we had an elective power beſides our active, how much ſoever that might determine the latter, it muſt itſelf be determined by ſome ſatisfaction apprehended in the choice.

But the ſuggeſtion of motives to our thoughts is as much an action, as the moving of our limbs, and if any thing obſtructs their riſing, notwithſtanding our endeavours to call them up, we may be free or reſtrained with reſpect to that action; but in reſpect to our firſt endeavours, we are no more capable of either, in one caſe than the other.

Therefore we may agree with Mr. Locke in pronouncing Liberty as little applicable to Volition, taken in the philoſophical ſence,

as

as Squareneſs is to Virtue, or Swiftneſs to Sleep.

8. But if we liſten to the common diſcourſes of mankind, we ſhall find them ſpeaking of ſeveral Wills, ſeveral agents, in the ſame perſon, reſiſting, counteracting, overpowering and controuling one another: hence the ſo uſual expreſſions of the ſpiritual and carnal Wills, of the man and of the beaſt, of ſelf-will and reaſon, of denying our Wills, ſubduing our paſſions, or being enſlaved by them, of acting unwillingly or againſt our Will, and the like. All which take riſe from a metonyme of the cauſe for the effect; for our actions being conſtantly determined either by the deciſions of our judgement, or ſollicitations of our deſires, we miſtake them for the Will itſelf: nor is it a little confirmation of the Will being actuated by motives, to find them ſo intimately connected therewith that a common eye cannot diſtinguiſh them apart.

When in our ſober moods we deliberate and afterwards fix upon our meaſures of conduct; we look upon ſuch determination as our Will, which we conceive not a tranſient act, but an abiding power, exerting itſelf from time to time as opportunities offer, until either the deſign be compleated, or freſh reaſons prevail on us to alter it.

But

But it often happens, that ſome inordinate paſſion or inveterate habit comes athwart our way, and puts us by from the proſecution of our deſign, without making us change it: this we likewiſe regard as our Will, being ſenſible that what we do by its inſtigation is ſtill our own act; and becauſe we find the ſame deſire prompting us at different times, we apprehend this too a permanent power lying in us, ready to be exerted upon the proper objects preſenting. Thus we get the idea of two Wills oppoſing, impeding, reſtraining, and maſtering one another.

Sometimes there enſues a conteſt between them, the mind hovering uncertain for a while, until at laſt ſhe ſettles on either ſide: hence comes the idea of a third Will, determining between the other two; and I believe this gave riſe to the notion of an elective, beſides our active power.

But theſe ſtruggles are owing to the fluctuations of ſtrength in our motives, and the victory to ſome one of them catching the idea of Satisfaction away from the reſt: for 'tis well known, that motives as well of reaſon as paſſion, do not always appear in equal colours, nor preſs with equal force, but urge vehemently or feebly by turns, with frequent and ſudden variations. And we may perceive the like wavering in our cooleſt deliberations

between two meaſures of conduct or two diverſions; wherein the mind cannot be ſuſpected of giving a preference, being diſpoſed all along to follow whichever ſhall be found the beſt or moſt entertaining: but both appear ſuch alternately, until at laſt the balance of judgement or fancy ſettles without intervention of the Will to caſt it either way.

9. Nevertheleſs, men cannot be put out of their accuſtomed manner of talking and thinking; therefore in compliance with their conceptions, let us ſuppoſe a diverſity of Wills, that thoſe Wills exert permanent acts, laſting for hours and days without intermiſſion, and that we may will at one time, what we ſhall will at another. In this light there is certainly room for applying reſtraint and freedom to the Will; for its operations being now conceived paſſing through a length of time before they take effect, may be obſtructed, or turned aſide in their paſſage by ſomething elſe: ſo if I do in the afternoon what I had determined in the morning to forbear, my former Will ſtill continuing the ſame, I am under a force, and the Will I have at preſent is a different Will from that remaining with me from the morning's determination, and counteracts it.

But it being obvious that we can exert our power only one way at a time, we are apt to entertain a contradictory notion that, while

we

we have a diverſity of Wills within us, one of them only is our own, and eſteem each of them ſuch in turn according as we chance to be in the humour. Sometimes it is the Will of inclination, and muſt be ſo taken in all expreſſions relating to ſelf-denial, to curbing our Wills, or to things we do unwillingly, or againſt our Will, that is, againſt our liking: but more commonly we underſtand the determination of our judgement to be our Will, becauſe there are none of us without this Will; for I ſuppoſe nobody ever refuſes to do what his preſent judgement repreſents as beſt, provided it give him no trouble in the performance, nor thwart any inclination, or fancy whatever; therefore this is a Will always ſubſiſting in us, though not always taking effect.

As to the third Will, that of Election, this takes place only occaſionally, when there is a conteſt between the other two: for as nobody ever chooſes to act againſt his judgement without ſome inclination drawing him, or uneaſineſs driving him the other way; ſo likewiſe I imagine nobody ever chuſes to abſtain from doing what he likes, when he ſees no reaſon in the world why he ſhould forbear. When Reaſon and Inclination urge the ſame way, or one alone ſollicits, the other remaining totally ſilent, which frequently happens, there is but one object preſented to the mind, who

in that caſe has no room to make any choice or election at all.

Therefore the Will of Judgement or Reſolution, in common propriety of language, is to be eſteemed our Will; our freedom depending upon the preſence, or abſence of any impediment which might prevent that from directing our motions: and ſo St. Paul underſtood it, where he repreſents the carnal man as omitting to do the things he would, and doing the things he would not, which he juſtly ſtiles, a wretched bondage. Nor can that glorious liberty of the Sons of God, which we are exhorted to aſſert, be better expounded than by an exemption from all inordinate deſires and temptations, ſo that we may perform whatever our reaſon and duty recommends with eaſe and readineſs.

10. But there is a reſtraint which our judgement lays upon itſelf, when an action occurs we judge eligible regarded alone, but cannot be done without omitting ſomething elſe we judge more expedient, we think ourſelves not at liberty to do it. Thus if I am aſked to do ſome little good office for a friend, when ſome buſineſs of importance calls me another way, I ſhall excuſe myſelf by ſaying, I would gladly oblige him if I were not under a neceſſity of attending to my buſineſs.

It

It is this oppoſition of things eligible to the judgement, if conſidered apart, that gives birth to thoſe we have called Motives of Neceſſity, to Obligation, to Duty, the command of a Superior, the regard for our Health, our Preſervation, the avoidance of Miſchief, or Damage; all which compel us many times to act otherwiſe than we wiſh, or than our judgement would chooſe, if theſe bars did not ſtand in the way: but this kind of neceſſity is a very unſtable term, the ſame caſe being eſteemed ſuch in one light which is not in another.

A man having a ſeal put forcibly into his hand, and the hand with the ſame violence preſſed down upon wax affixed to a deed, containing a conveyance of his eſtate, will be counted by every body under neceſſity; but then the ſealing is no more his act than it is the act of the ſeal employed therein, for both act by impulſe without any thing that can be called freedom.

But what if his hands being left at liberty, he be only locked up in a room, and threatened to be kept there without victuals or drink until he ſhall ſeal? Perhaps he has a wife and children who muſt be ruined by the loſs of his eſtate, and being a man of reſolution, he determines bravely to periſh rather than bring them to deſtruction, in this [illegible]

condition he lolls out at a window, where he ſees an intimate friend of his, a lawyer, who adviſes him to execute, for that no damage can enſue therefrom: he then calls for the deed, ſets to his ſeal, and obtains his enlargement. This the Philoſopher will not allow to be an act of neceſſity, for it was in his power to have forborn; and he did actually forbear until his friend's admonition having altered his judgement, he choſe voluntarily to ſeal, upon a prudential motive of ſaving his life without detriment to his family. The Grantees bring ejectment for the land in Weſtminſter-hall, where the whole caſe appearing upon evidence as above, the judge and jury pronounce the deed void, for that the man was under dureſſe, and his act not voluntary but impoſed upon him by force. Thus we find the ſame act adjudged neceſſary in legal conſtruction, which was free and voluntary in the philoſophical.

Now to change the caſe a little, imagine the confinement were in a public gaol for a lawful debt, which the party has no means of paying, nor credit to procure bail; ſomebody offers to purchaſe a farm contiguous to his houſe, and which it would be greatly inconvenient for him to part with, nevertheleſs he conſiders his health is infirm, and if he remains in priſon it will inevitably prove his death;

death; ſo he accepts the offer as the only poſſible means of extricating himſelf. If he be afterwards blamed for ſo imprudent a bargain, he will alledge the neceſſity of his affairs compelling him to it; and this allegation will be readily admitted as a full excuſe. If upon ejectment brought, he offers to refund the money, and refuſes to deliver poſſeſſion, urging the neceſſity he lay under, I am afraid this plea will not avail him; for the court will ſay, his act was free and voluntary, nor was he under any compulſion when he did it, therefore it muſt ſtand good.

Let us now vary our circumſtances once more, and ſuppoſe the man under no confinement or debt at all; but he has taken a fancy to ſome girl of the town; ſhe wants a ſum of money to throw away upon an extravagance, and will leave him for ſome other gallant, unleſs he will ſupply her, which he has no means of doing any other way, than by ſale of the farm above-mentioned: he is ſo beſotted with her allurements that he cannot live without her; ſo he executes the conveyance, though ſorely againſt the grain, and againſt his judgement. He will be apt to plead neceſſity in excuſe for this fooliſh proceeding; but no indifferent perſon will admit it for ſuch: here then is a neceſſity men deem

ſo themſelves, though nobody elſe will call it by that name.

But Neceſſity being conſtantly oppoſed to Freewill, the changeableneſs of theſe terms, according to the lights wherein you regard them, gives riſe to as notable diſputes among us, as thoſe canvaſſed of old among the philoſophers concerning the proper colour of the feathers of a cock-pidgeon's neck, which preſents a different aſpect upon every little motion of the bird.

11. Every body eſteems freedom the baſis of morality; for no man deſerves praiſe or blame for doing what he could not help, or omitting what he was not at liberty to perform: we are juſtified in doing things upon the command of a ſuperiour, which were blameable had we done them upon our own accord; and it is a received maxim, that neceſſity has no law. Nevertheleſs the reſtraints laid upon us by our vices juſtify us not, and the ſlave of ſin is always thought anſwerable for the drudgery he goes through in obedience to his tyrant. On the other hand, we may merit commendation, by complying with the neceſſary obligations of our religion and our duty.

Oftentimes, as has been already remarked, we blend the idea of impotence with want of liberty, or attribute to the one, what proceeds

proceeds from the other; and indeed the latter in ſome meaſure depends upon the former; for whatever obſtacle ſtands in our way, were our ſtrength increaſed ſo as greatly to ſurmount it, would become none, but we ſhould be ſet at liberty from its oppoſition. A man bound hand and foot with cords, upon having the ſtrength of Sampſon given him, would regain his liberty without being untied: and a cobweb wound about our hands makes no abatement in our freedom, though it deſtroys that of a fly; not that it does not oppoſe the ſame reſiſtance againſt our fingers as it does againſt the legs of the fly, but becauſe that reſiſtance is nothing in compariſon with our greater ſtrength.

When ſome fond paſſion captivates the heart, and forces us upon actions our preſent judgement diſapproves, we are ſaid to labour under an impotence of mind; and the compliance with ſuch temptations as few or none can reſiſt, is attributed to the weakneſs of human nature. When honour, or duty calls a man to ſome very painful enterprize, like thoſe of Scævola, Regulus, or the Chriſtian Martyrs, he does not want freedom of action to accompliſh it; for his hands will as readily obey the command of the mind to thruſt them into burning

burning coals, as into a baſon of water, if he can but bring his mind to give the command. Perhaps ſome of us might reſolve upon ſuch an exploit, but ſhould probably flinch in the attempt; and we many times do enter confidently upon undertakings where we find our courage fail in the execution: here then is an effect of the Will directing her own volitions, which yet are forcibly turned a contrary way by the terrors of the pain. So then here, if ever, the Will is not free to follow her own choice and election: nevertheleſs, when trials of this ſort have been undergone, we do not reckon them inſtances of greater freewill, but greater ſtrength of virtue, and extraordinary vigour of mind.

So if a covetous man intends to give money in charity, but when he comes to take his guineas out of the bag, has not the heart to part with them; he has a Will to do a generous deed, and would execute it if not reſtrained by his fondneſs for the pelf; yet we do not ordinarily reckon him deſtitute of Freewill, but that he has not power to give anything away. Thus we eſteem the ſame caſe a defect of Liberty, or of Power, according as we fix our eye upon th[illegible]th of the obſtacle, or feebleneſs [illegible]nt.

12. The

12. The Speculative talk much of a free and neceſſary Agency, terms not in uſe among the vulgar, nor do they loſe anything by the want of them: for if we go to examine what Free Agency is, we ſhall find it to be no more than the dependency of actions upon volition; therefore man is a free Agent, becauſe his limbs move according to the directions of his Will, but Matter a neceſſary Agent, as having no Will, and acting ſolely by virtue of the motion or impulſe imparted to it.

Not but upon a man's being puſhed violently down to the ground his fall is neceſſary, but then it is properly no act of his; for though we are apt to ſay he hurt himſelf by the fall, which implies ſomething done by him, yet upon mature conſideration, we never attribute the hurt to him, but to the perſon who threw him down: for in this caſe his motion is ſimilar to that of body, which does not properly act, but only tranſmits the action of ſomething elſe that moved it. When a ſtone ſtrikes againſt a wall it ſerves only as a channel of conveyance for the force of the engine from whence it was caſt; that again of the ſprings and wheels whereby it was worked; and ſo backwards in a ſeries of effects and cauſes, until you come to ſome voluntary agent giving

giving the firſt impulſe, whoſe act it is, whether he intend the conſequence or no. If a man ſhoots another, the wound made by the bullet is his act, and he chargeable with the murder; or if he ſhot at a crow and happened to kill a man, though he be guilty of no crime, ſtill the ſlaughter is his act; but an undeſigned and accidental one. And if we commonly aſcribe powers to body, it is becauſe we cannot trace them back to the cauſes from whence they originally ſprung.

Upon this view of the matter, we ſee that free Agency has nothing to do with queſtions concerning Liberty, for the one may remain after the other being taken away. A man ſhut up in a priſon ſtill continues a free agent of ſuch actions as he can perform; if he would gladly go abroad but ſits ſtill in his wicker chair, as knowing the doors are locked, his quieſcence is an act of free Agency, not like that of the chair he ſits on, for he might have riſen from it if he would. Or if he be ſhoved along by the ſhoulders, though he muſt move, being under a force, yet he is a free agent in the motion of his legs; for a ſtatue puſhed along in like manner, being a neceſſary agent, would have fallen upon its face.

Thus how much ſoever we may be abridged or confined in our powers, while there is any thing

thing left that we can do, our free agency ſubſiſts entire, for this relates only to our manner of doing thoſe actions we perform, that is, by willing them; and conſequently in every thing a man does which is properly his act, whether by compulſion or reſtraint, or free choice, he is in that inſtance a free agent, or in other words, he is ſuch whenever he is an agent at all.

13. But all this will not ſatisfy the curious, for they aſk further, whether a man have free agency to will ſuch a particular exertion of his power as well as to execute it. Now this is another kind of Agency from that we have been ſpeaking of hitherto; and for diſtinction ſake we ſhall beg leave to call it free Volency (for the Speculative will allow one another to coin a word upon occaſion): ſo the queſtion is not whether man be a free Agent, but a free Volent; for his agency remains the ſame, provided his actions follow according to his volition, whatever laws this latter be ſubject to.

Now in order to raiſe a queſtion upon this head, we muſt ſuppoſe our Volition the effect of ſome prior or other act of the Will beſides the Volition itſelf under examination: but we have ſeen in the progreſs of this work, that the Will is no ſubject of her own operation, but takes her turns from time to time, accord-

ing

ing to the preſent ſtate of the judgement and imagination; therefore the epithet Free, can neither be affirmed, nor denied, nor any ways applied to Volency; this not being immediately produced by any exertion of our power. 'Tis true, we do often determine beforehand what we will do, and purſue meaſures accordingly, which we ſhould have omitted, had it not been for ſuch determination; and in this ſenſe the Will acts upon herſelf, but then ſhe does it mediately by fixing ſuch ideas, reſolutions, or propenſities, upon the memory and imagination as will ſerve her for motives by and by; and it is plain her agency terminates with the impreſſing ſuch ideas, becauſe if they ſlip out of our head, or ſomething happens to render the determination inexpedient, though we act contrary to it, yet no doubts ariſe concerning our free Agency, either in the firſt determination or ſubſequent volition.

Beſides, ſome of our actions leave room for no more than one operation of the Will; a man turning the corner of a ſtreet ſees ſomebody come haſtily againſt him, and ſuddenly ſtarts back; here the firſt act of his Will is that whereby he moves his limbs, ſo there is no prior Agency whereto the term free may be applied.

There

There are ſome who hold two conſubſiſting Wills, an active and an elective, the latter continually directing the former, how truly I ſhall not examine; but upon this ſuppoſition man is a free Agent, and a free Volent; for free Agency is the dependence of his actions upon volition, and free volency the dependence of volition upon his choice; but you cannot go on further to entitle him a free electant too; for I never heard of any body ſpinning the thread ſo fine as to ſuppoſe another election determining that which determines the Will: all who hold an elective power making it either dependent upon motives, or ſelf-moving independent on all cauſes whatever, even on any prior, or other act of the Will; ſo the term Free cannot be applicable to it, becauſe we are free only in ſuch things as will enſue upon ſome previous act of the Will exerted to produce them.

We do indeed often talk in common converſation of a free, and a forced choice; but this relates to the conſequence of our choice, not to the manner of making it, and depends not ſo much upon our being able to chooſe, as to obtain the thing choſen. We ſay indeed, a man has not liberty to chooſe when he knows the thing is not to be had, becauſe he cannot will an impoſſibility; for how much ſoever we may wiſh or deſire, we never actually

ally Will without a preſent apprehenſion of ſomething feaſible: but this proves volition dependent upon final cauſes occurring to the imagination, for an unattainable end is no end at all, becauſe it is not a thing wherein our efforts may terminate, nor can the mind raiſe a volition of it by any power ſhe poſſeſſes. Beſides that choice, in vulgar acceptation, lies undoubtedly liable to conſtraint, we meet with numberleſs inſtances every day of our being confined in our choice; which ſhows that choice in this ſence is a different thing from the elective power ſpoken of juſt now; for that, the maintainers of it inſiſt upon as a privilege inherent in human nature, which nothing can diveſt us of, nor any external force, or circumſtances of ſituation controul; but that we have always power to will, how much ſoever we may be reſtrained from doing.

14. Thus have I endeavoured to point out ſome of thoſe variations of ſence our words are liable to, according to the occaſion introducing them, or light wherein they are placed: and it is this fluctuation of language that makes the labyrinth, and throws up the briars and thorns that entangle us in our reaſonings upon human Liberty. For men ſet out with one queſtion, but ſcarce have gone a few ſteps before they ſlide inſenſibly into another,

other, from thence into a third, and ſo on without limitation: no wonder then they cannot come to a ſatisfactory concluſion upon a ſubject perpetually changing.

I know of none other uſe in the diſcuſſion above attempted of thoſe ſeveral changes, unleſs to warn men againſt being beguiled by them, for let them keep their ideas ſteady, and I believe they will find no difficulties. Therefore I hold it wrong to enter upon a debate concerning free Will in general, that being a variable term, as well in our common diſcourſes, as in our abſtract ſpeculations; for the Will is always free, that is, always doing ſomething or other while we wake, yet at the ſame time may be confined to one, or a few ways of exerting herſelf: but let them take into conſideration particular acts of the Will, and they will find her ſometimes free, ſometimes under force or reſtraint, and ſometimes neither of the three applicable to her, according to the different lights wherein they regard the matter, according to what they underſtand by the term Will, and what they apprehend to be an act of her's.

But with reſpect to our main point the conſiſtency of human Freedom with Providence, it is not much matter what notions men entertain of Liberty, of Agency, of Will, or Choice; provided they contemplate each in-

Main Point.

ſtance ſingly by itſelf, and do not blend them together, nor change them, by juggling like a conjuror with cups and balls. For they muſt diſcern ſo much ſimilitude in all caſes of Liberty that can be produced, if they will but keep their ideas clear, and under ſuch diſcipline as not to joſtle, or run into one another, that the ſame conſequences will always follow, how variouſly ſoever they may underſtand Liberty in the ſeveral caſes propoſed.

15. Let us conſider a man juſt enlarged out of priſon, who we ſhall ſay has regained his liberty, becauſe he can ſtay at home, or go abroad this way, or that, north or ſouth as he pleaſes. So his freedom conſiſts in the dependence of his motions upon his Will, in his ſtanding ſo circumſtanced as that nothing hinders but that reſt, or motion, or any particular motion he ſhall direct, ſhall enſue upon his willing; it does not at all relate to the inducements he may have for willing, whether ſome prudential motive, or ſudden ſtart of fancy, or impulſe of paſſion, or whether he put it to the caſt of a die; in each caſe he remains at full liberty to do as he will.

Well, but ſuppoſe him under the authority of ſome maſter, who gives him a holiday to divert himſelf at home, or go abroad wherever he chooſes. I ſhall not [illegible] whether the injunctions of a Sup[illegible]

ly an abridgement of human Liberty, for that they may be diſobeyed by any one who ſhall diſregard the conſequences: let us grant for the preſent, that he could not do the thing whereon his choice ſhall fall, if any prohibition were given againſt it, yet there being no ſuch prohibition, leaves him beſides his liberty of action, a liberty of choice in what manner he ſhall uſe his other liberty. Now this liberty, like the former, conſiſts in the dependence of his actions upon his choice; for where he has free choice, nobody can doubt he will do as he chooſes; and where he has not, he may be forced to do what he does not chooſe: but it has no concern with the cauſes of his choice, whether he ſpend his holiday prudently, or fooliſhly, according to his own whims, or the perſuaſions of an acquaintance.

But ſuppoſe he has ſtrong reaſons either of religion, or duty, or reſpect to ſome Relation who may leave him a good legacy which urge him to go one way, but his companions, or his own jovial diſpoſition, ſollicit him another to the alehouſe, and nobody has any authority to interpoſe; ſo he remains ſtill at liberty to chooſe between them, becauſe he may take either way as his Will and his choice [illegible] No, you ſay, 'tis not [illegible] dom of choice; for though

though I admit he may do as he chooſes, yet I doubt his being free to chooſe; becauſe his evil habit of tippling may force a choice upon him whether he will or no. Beware, my friend, of the mazes in the labyrinth, for we are now ſtriking into another alley, and ſtarting a different queſtion from that we had under contemplation before.

In common uſage, we apply Liberty indifferently to the power or act performed thereby; for we ſay the choice is free when nothing hinders, but that we may do whatever it ſhall pitch upon, and the act free when it follows in conſequence of our choice, and not of any compulſion obliging us to perform it. And one of the moſt dangerous ſources of perplexity ariſes from the want of diſtinguiſhing in our enquiries concerning the freedom of a power, whether we regard it as a cauſe or an effect; for while we behold it in a double light, as too frequently is done, we ſhall never ſee diſtinctly where to find an iſſue. According to your preſent ſtating the doubt, we muſt conſider it as an effect, the proper object of ſome power the man has to influence his choice, unleſs the prevalence of habit ſhould give it a contrary bias.

As to caſes of reſtraint they will conduce nothing to our main purpoſe; therefore we will conſider only ſuch caſes wherein you may ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe a freedom of choice in our preſent ſence of the Term, that is, as an effect of ſome power we poſſeſs.

16. Suppoſe a man deliberating in the morning how he ſhall lay out his afternoon: there are no bolts nor bars in his way, no authority of a ſuperiour, nor reſtraint of law, duty, honour, or obligation, intervening in the matters under deliberation; ſo we know his afternoon's actions will be ſuch as his Will and Choice ſhall then direct; but neither is there any ſtrong inclination, or paſſion at work, which might drive him upon one way of employing himſelf preferably to the reſt; ſo he ſtands indifferent to chooſe now in what manner he ſhall diſpoſe of himſelf in the afternoon, nor has he any choice until he ſhall determine it by ſome preſent act of his Will.

I do not give this as a philoſophical repreſentation of the caſe, but certain it is, we often do conceive ourſelves in a ſituation (how juſtly it is no matter) to will or chooſe what we ſhall will and do by and by: for if upon aſking a friend to walk with you in the Park this afternoon, he ſhould gravely reply, Good Sir, I cannot poſſibly tell you, for the preſent moment only is in our power; my future actions depend upon my future volitions, and the Will cannot act upon itſelf, nor is what

I ſhall do five hours hence the ſubject of my preſent option: you would think he bantered you, and be apt to cry, Pr'ythee cannot you chooſe either to walk, or let it alone, cannot you tell me whether you will or no?

Therefore unleſs we will talk in a ſtrain contrary to the language and conceptions of all mankind, we muſt acknowledge that a perſon in the caſe before us has a perfect freedom of choice. But wherein does this freedom conſiſt? where, unleſs in the abſence of all impediment, reſtraint, authority, obligation or force whatſoever againſt his power of chooſing; ſo that his choice will continue ſuch as he fixes it, and his afternoon's actions follow preciſely according to his preſent determination; nor has it any thing to do with the motives or cauſes inducing him to chooſe riding rather than walking, or ſtaying at home before both.

But we have not done yet; for ſome there be who inſiſt upon an elective Power conſubſiſting with our power of Volition, and determining it as well in giving the preference to what we are to do hereafter, as in the preſent exerciſe of our bodily powers. Be it ſo, ſince they will have it ſo. Then the freedom of this elective Power depends upon the removal of all force or impediment againſt the Will taking ſuch determination as is elected, but not

at

at all upon the cauſe of ſuch election. Add further, that when we do what we had elected or determined before-hand, nobody will deny our being free in the volitions exerted at the time of execution: which proves Freedom conſiſtent with Precauſation, for otherwiſe either our Election and Predetermination muſt have no avail nor influence upon our future conduct, or elſe muſt put a force upon the Will, conſtraining it to act conformably to them until they were compleated.

17. Thus how many powers ſoever we may conceive in the mind directing one another, the proper and genuine idea of Freedom, with reſpect to each of them, will be the ſame: for in order to diſcuſs the point of freedom, we muſt conſider ſome operating power as the cauſe, and ſome exertion of the power operated upon as an effect to be produced thereby: if ſuch effect will follow as may be expected from the cauſe, then are we free in the operating power, and our exertion of the operated is our own free act; but if a different effect will follow, then are we under force or reſtraint.

If we enquire further whether we be free to uſe this operating power, this is a new queſtion which muſt be diſcuſſed in like manner with the former, by conſidering the

operating power as an effect, and ſome other power not thought of before as a cauſe.

For let the mind have ever ſo much power to act upon herſelf, either by predetermination, or coexiſtent election, ſuch her acting is an action as much as acting upon the limbs, and the freedom of it muſt be tried by the ſame rules: for as I have freedom of action ſo long as there lies no bar or obſtacle againſt uſing my bodily powers in ſuch manner as my Will ſhall direct, whatever cauſes may incline me to employ them one particular way; ſo have I freedom of Will while nothing hinders, but that ſuch volition ſhall take place as I predetermine or elect, whatever may give occaſion to my ſo determining or electing. For Liberty bears no connection with any thing antecedent to the operation of that power whoſe liberty we enquire into, but ſolely with what ſhall follow after it, and with the removal of all obſtruction which might prevent it from taking effect: therefore may well conſiſt with cauſes prior to ſuch operation, and with the dominion of that Providence whoſe diſpoſal thoſe cauſes lie under.

Thus while we can keep a Diſputant to any one ſettled point, one ſtated caſe of acting, or willing, we ſhall manage well enough with him; but men are apt to dodge about the

the poſt, alledging, that we may will as we chooſe, and chooſe if we will, without underſtanding themſelves in the uſe of thoſe terms, or ſettling the diſtinction between them; but one moment taking them for ſynonimous, and the next for different acts producing one another. Whereas if we fix the meaning of choice to a predetermination, then in ſuch caſes where our determination ſtands confined to certain limits, or we are compelled to take a courſe contrary to that we determine, our volitions, and conſequently our actions depend upon the cauſes applying ſuch force or reſtraint: but in caſes where we remain perfectly free to proſecute whatever we may determine upon, they depend upon the motives occurring to our judgement, or imagination in making the determination, or upon our former cares in forming the condition of our mind; which cares depended upon the like cauſes, and ſo on as far as the Will was concerned, until you come to ſome firſt determination, or act of the mind to which there was none other act preceding; which act muſt depend upon external cauſes; and conſequently ſo muſt all ſubſequent volitions dependent thereon.

18. As to the coexiſtent elective power, ſelf-moving and independent on all cauſes, whether of external objects, motives of judgement

ment and imagination, or prior determinations of our own, if this could once be well eſtabliſhed, then farewell to all prudence, deliberation, and dependence upon our own conduct, and that of other people: for what avails it to contrive a plan of my meaſures ever ſo wiſely, to inculcate ſalutary maxims upon my mind, to nouriſh ſentiments of honour, or duty, or moral ſenſes for my guidance, if I may afterwards chance to elect the wildeſt, and moſt extravagant actions in defiance of all reaſon, or inclination, or former reſolutions to the contrary? or how can I depend that my beſt and deareſt friend will not murder me, while there is a hazard that he may elect in oppoſition to all the judgement and diſcretion in his head, the ſentiments and deſires in his heart?

But ſuch terrors as theſe the moſt zealous devotees of an elective power do not lie under; they depend upon men's acting conformably to their characters; if they know a hardened villain, they make no queſtion of his electing acts of violence, injury and diſhoneſty whenever opportunity ſhall ſerve, and confide in themſelves for making juſt and wiſe elections in their future conduct.

What then occaſions the difference between man and man? for there muſt be ſome cauſe of the moral character, ſome account

to

to be given why we know what uſe each perſon will make of his elective power. The difference, ſay they, lies in the Will itſelf, which has a peculiar bent, or ply, or I know not what, different from that of another perſon: the villain has a perverſeneſs of Will, therefore will always chooſe perverſely; and they themſelves a rectitude of Will, ſo of courſe they will chooſe rightly and wiſely. But whence got they this I know not what in their Will? was it innate? was it the natural conſtitution of their mind? Then they ought to bleſs the Author of their nature, who gave them this happy conſtitution on creating them. But no, this muſt not be the caſe; for they will loſe all merit of their rectitude, unleſs it was of their own acquiring; therefore they gave this right Ply to their Wills themſelves by their former cares, and induſtry, and right management of their elective power. Be it ſo; for we are in the humour to admit every thing they pleaſe to aſſume; ſtill we muſt aſk, what moved them to ſuch right management? it could not be the Ply of their Will; for if this were acquired, they could not have it before they acquired it, nor could they derive from thence their choice of the right methods taken in the acquiſition. What then, did they light upon thoſe methods by mere chance?

chance? I do not ſuſpect they will ſay this; for this would make Virtue nothing more than a lucky hit, which one Simpleton might ſtumble upon as well as another. If then their choice had a ſource, there remains none other we can gueſs beſides education, example, company, the temperament of their body, ſtate of their mental organization, objects ſurrounding them, events touching their notice, and the like; cauſes antecedent and external to the mind electing, under the direction of that power whom they muſt acknowledge to govern all things external.

19. Upon the whole, we may conclude Freedom, in whatever light we place it, or to whatever power, whether real or imaginary, apply it, by no means repugnant to the operation of prior cauſes moving us to the exerciſe of that power; nor to the dominion of Providence, having all thoſe cauſes and their cauſes at diſpoſal: ſo that the Plan of Providence may well take effect without infringing a tittle upon our Liberty. Events which neither our judgement, nor our appetite would incline us to produce, are placed out of our power, and entruſted in the hands of other agents, ſo come to paſs by neceſſity with reſpect to us; the returns of ſummer and winter do not depend upon our option, becauſe we might be apt to chooſe a perpetual ſpring:

but

but wherever God thinks proper to employ us in executing any part of his plan, there needs only to give us the powers, the talents, the opportunities, the judgements, the motives requiſite, and we ſhall compleat the lines allotted us by the exerciſe of our freedom.

So far as you can penetrate into a man's ſentiments, and deſires, and have the proper objects at command, you may put him upon any work you ſhall require: if money be his idol, and you have enough to bribe him, you may make him do whatever you pleaſe; if he make his belly his god, you may draw him from Millbank to Radcliffe-highway by an exquiſite entertainment; or if good nature be his ruling principle, you may employ him in any kind office you ſhall want. Your politicians know how to turn the paſſions of men independent on their authority to ſerve their deſigns: and the Divine Politician may do this more compleatly, not only as he knows perfectly the ſecrets of all hearts, but as he gave them that underſtanding and thoſe appetites, which determine the colour of their actions; and we need not doubt of his having given them ſuch as will effectually anſwer the purpoſes intended by them.

In ſome few inſtances where we know the hearts of men, we can effect our purpoſes with

with them as ſurely as we can with any corporeal inſtruments in our hands: if you want to give a ball, or an entertainment, 'tis but ſending an invitation to perſons fond of theſe diverſions, and you will have your company reſort to you of their own free choice, nor could you bring them more effectually, if you had the authority of an abſolute monarch over them; ſo that in this inſtance you govern their motions either to Hickford's, or the Apollo near Temple Bar, or your own dining-room, without the leaſt impeachment of their liberty. And we have a preſent example before our eyes of a monarch, who having the love of his ſubjects, can by their free ſervices reſiſt the combined efforts of the mightieſt deſpotic powers upon earth. Nor can Deſpotiſm itſelf do any great matters without aid of Free Will: for rewards, honours, and encouragements, thoſe engines of free agency, contribute more to the valour of armies, than any ſcourges of puniſhment, or peremptory edicts concluding, For ſuch is our Will.

Since then experience teſtifies, that man can make ſo much uſe of liberty towards accompliſhing his deſigns, why ſhould we ſcruple to think the ſame of God in a larger extent? for he not only has all the objects in his power which touch the ſprings of action, but

fabricated

fabricated the ſprings themſelves, and ſet them to receive what touches they ſhall take.

20 But we judge of the workings of Providence by our own narrow way of proceeding; we take our meaſures from time to time as the expedience of them occurs to our thoughts, and then muſt make what uſe we can of the materials or inſtruments before us; be they ſuch as exactly ſuit our purpoſe, or not; and even if we had the making of our inſtruments, yet not always knowing what we ſhall want to do with them, we ſhould often find them inconvenient for our ſervice: nor is it unfrequent that the works we performed yeſterday ſtand in the way of thoſe we are to perform to-day, becauſe new ſchemes and new occaſions of employing ourſelves occur to us perpetually. In like manner we vulgarly imagine God acting occaſionally, and taking up purpoſes he had not thought of before until a concurrence of circumſtances rendered them expedient. We apprehend him as having turned the numerous race of men looſe into the wide world, endowed them with various powers, talents, appetites, and characters, without knowing preciſely, or without caring what they will produce. We allow him indeed to have formed the main lines of a plan; but left large vacancies [illegible] up by

[illegible]ance,

chance, whoſe wild workings lie under his controul to divert their courſe when they would interfere with the ſtrokes of his pencil. For the eye of Providence watches over the motions of human creatures, when he ſees them running counter to his deſigns, he turns them aſide, or guides them by his ſecret influence to cooperate therewith.

Now conſidering the vaſt variety of humours, the diſcordant aims and intereſts among mankind, it muſt be acknowledged that the government of the world, in this view of it, could not be adminiſtered without either continual miraculous interpoſitions in the motions of matter; or compulſions and reſtraints upon free Agency, giving our volition another turn than it would take from the motives preſent before us, or cauſing other motions to ariſe in our limbs, and thoughts in our minds, than our preſent volition would naturally produce.

But when we reflect that even the wanton gambols of chance muſt reſult from agents and cauſes originally ſet at work by the Almighty, when we call to mind his infinite Wiſdom and Omniſcience which nothing can eſcape, nothing perplex or overload; it ſeems more congruous with that boundleſs attribute to imagine that no ſingle, nor moſt diſtant effect of the powers and motions he gave was overlooked,

overlooked, no chaſms or empty ſpaces left in his deſign: but that upon the formation of a world he laid a full and perfect plan of all the operations that ſhould enſue during the period of its continuance.

And what interpoſitions there are (for I would leave every one to his own opinion concerning the frequency, or rarity of them,) how much ſoever they may operate ſecretly to us, were not ſudden expedients to anſwer unforeſeen emergencies, but contained in the original plan; which was purpoſely ſo framed as to need his interpoſing hand when, and where, and as often as he predetermined to apply to it. But in thoſe parts wherein he has thought proper to employ us as his inſtruments for executing them, to controul us in the exerciſe of our powers would be to defeat his own deſigns, by diſturbing the operation of thoſe cauſes himſelf had choſen for the accompliſhment of them.

Thus he governs all things in heaven and earth by power and wiſdom conjointly; matter by neceſſity and impulſe, brutes by ſenſe and inſtinct, the bleſſed ſpirits above by ſignifications of his Will, which they gladly and freely ſet themſelves to fulfil, man partly by neceſſary agents affecting him, partly by laws, reſtrictions, apprehenſions of

miſchief and danger controuling him, and partly by leaving him to his free choice in following ſuch portion of underſtanding and appetites as himſelf has allotted him.

21. Nor need we fancy ourſelves always in ſhackles, becauſe every moment under the dominion and conduct of Providence; for it has been ſhown that Liberty has no concern with cauſes antecedent to the exerciſe of our power, but ſolely with what might ſtand in our way upon ſuch exerciſe: if I can do what I will, I have freedom of action, no matter how I came to will this or that particular employment: if I can chooſe as I will, I have freedom of choice, no matter what induced me to make one choice preferably to all others.

What then, are we mere puppets, actuated by ſprings and wires, becauſe it was given us both to will and to do? By no means; for when they are given us, we have as full and free liberty to uſe them both, as if they had fallen upon us by chance, or we had made them for ourſelves. If my father left me a good portion, I can do the ſame with it, and have as free diſpoſal of it, as if I had made the gold myſelf by tranſmutation with the Philoſopher's ſtone: and if he brought me by the cares of his education from a laviſh temper to prudence and

œconomy,

œconomy, this does not impeach my liberty to ſquander it all away.

Nor have we reaſon to diſturb ourſelves with imaginations of a thraldom from ſecret influences, and unſeen ſprings, when thoſe that are manifeſt and ſeen do not work upon us by conſtraint; for ſometimes we may diſcern the influence that guides us, and yet find no thraldom in following whither it leads.

How much of our employment depends upon the natural appetites of hunger and thirſt? You may pretend indeed that theſe are acts of neceſſity, becauſe he muſt eat, or ſtarve: but follow men to their meals, and you will not ſee one in a thouſand that eats becauſe he muſt, but becauſe he likes it. Which of us ever ſits down to table by compulſion, or feels himſelf conſtrained to cut the joint before him, or perceives his tongue moved by ſtrings like a puppet when he calls for a glaſs of wine?

What ſhall we ſay to the mutual propenſity between the ſexes, another main ſpring in the hand of God, by which he preſerves the race of men upon earth? How many under twigs, what faſhions, contrivances, amuſements, accompliſhments, grow from that ſtem? but wherein does it check or overſhadow human [redacted] boys and girls meet together [redacted] or choice?

Is

Is the Miſs under a force when ſhe culls among her trinkets with curious toil to tiff herſelf out in the moſt engaging manner, or teazes pappa for money to buy a new-faſhioned ſilk? Is the Beau compelled againſt his Will to practiſe winning airs before the glaſs, or employ for whole hours all the thought withinſide his noddle to bepowder and becurl the outſide?

How ſtrongly does paternal inſtinct operate upon us! 'Tis by this channel that God tranſmits arts and ſciences, education, eſtates, conveniences of life, knowledge, and old experience from generation to generation. In this we ſee the finger of Providence and feel its potent touches, yet feel no limitation in our liberty therefrom: for what parent does not willingly go about the proviſions he makes for his children, or finds himſelf under any other direction than his own choice and judgement in the application of his cares for their advantage, or perceives himſelf moved by clock-work to procure any little toy, or diverſion for them?

22. Our powers of action ſtand limited to a certain extent of ground, but within the encloſure we may ramble about as we pleaſe to take our paſture, or our paſtime. Sometimes there are reſtraints hanging over us, which confine us to particular walks; obligations

and

and duties to be fulfilled, authority to be obeyed, wants to be ſupplied, neceſſaries of life to be provided, and it behoves us to regard theſe reſtrictions, or miſchief will enſue: but in many of our hours we have no limitations upon our conduct, and then we may move eaſily and lightly without the weight of any ſecret force or impediment encumbering us.

Nor need we fear leſt we may defeat the purpoſes of God, or make any breaches in the plan of his Providence; for he knew what uſes we would make of our Liberty, and has provided his plan accordingly. Let the Princes run madly into broils, and the Grecians ſuffer, the Will of Jove is fulfilled by their madneſs, and will be, whatever conduct man ſhall purſue. Therefore we have but our own Will to take care of; only let us not conſult ſolely our preſent Will and Fancy, but pay a due regard to what we may will to-morrow; and in our deliberations and execution of the prudential meaſures for procuring what we ſhall will to have another time, we may proceed with the ſame freedom as if there were no ſuperiour power able to controul us in the exerciſe of our faculties.

And the moſt uſeful deliberation we can enter upon, is how to enlarge our freedom,

for all are ready enough to allow that Happineſs conſiſts in liberty to do what we will; nor ſhall I contradict them, ſo they do not reſtrain Will to that of the preſent moment. We commonly underſtand by our Will what our Judgement repreſents as moſt eligible, or our Inclination prompts to as moſt alluring; and whenever theſe two coincide, our Will is quite free. Therefore ſo far as we can bring deſire to tally with reaſon, we ſhall enlarge the bounds of our liberty; and if we could do this compleatly ſo as to make a virtue of every neceſſity, and a pleaſure of every obligation, we ſhould never have any reſtraint hanging over us, but attain a perfect liberty; becauſe willing always what was right and feaſible, we ſhould always do what we would.

And this perfect liberty would more apparently, though not more really coincide with the plan of Providence than that pittance of it we now poſſeſs; for then we ſhould fulfill the Will of God knowingly, whereas now we fulfill it, but unknowingly, and many times by ſetting ourſelves moſt ſtrenuouſly to oppoſe it.

23. And now we might think the controverſy ended, and all difficulties gotten over, the freedom of Will being fully reconciled with the authority and dominion of God: but

but the buſy mind of man, ingenious in finding new perplexities to involve itſelf in, will not let us reſt quiet ſo; but ſeeing light open upon one ſpot, ſhifts the ſcene to ſome other corner, where it may cover itſelf with clouds and obſcurity; and as if fond of ſlavery, endeavours to derive a title thereto from another quarter, namely, that of Foreknowledge.

For, ſay the fine Reaſoners, if your actions are foreknown, you can do no otherwiſe than it is known you will do; ſo your hands are tied down to one particular manner of proceeding, nor are you at liberty to take any other than that you ſhall purſue.

But why ſo? what connection is there between another's knowledge, and my behaviour? it may poſſibly direct his own meaſures, but has no influence at all upon mine. You allow that while my actions remain unknown to every body I may be free; what then if after my being in poſſeſſion of this freedom ſome ſhrewd Politician ſhould diſcover what I will do, how does that diveſt me of it, in what reſpect alter my condition, or by what channel of communication does his diſcovery operate upon me.

No, ſay they, you miſtake the grounds of our objection; we do not aſſign his knowledge as a cauſe of any thing you do, nor pretend it lays any reſtrain[illegible] liberty;

N[illegible]

we only produce it as an evidence of another reſtraint hanging over you; for he could not know how you will behave, unleſs it were certain; therefore his knowledge is a proof that you will certainly do as he knows; but what will certainly come to paſs cannot fall out otherwiſe; ſo you have no liberty left, becauſe you cannot do what will never be done.

But how does this alter the caſe? wherein is the difference between Certainty and Knowledge? Why yes, the difference lies here, that Certainty is the object of Knowledge, though ſhe may not have caſt her eye upon it; therefore is a different thing, as having exiſted before it; for his diſcovery did not make the Certainty, but preſuppoſes it; for the thing was certain before, though he did not know it.

But what ſort of thing is this Certainty to which you aſcribe ſuch irreſiſtible force? let us know what rank of Beings to place it under? is it a ſubſtance? or if a quality or accident, in what ſubſtance does it reſide? for we generally apply it to propoſitions which are only judgements of the mind. It is no agent, it is no power, nor has any efficacy in its ſtate of pre-exiſtence to knowledge; for were it ever ſo certain the houſe was on fire, this

this would influence none of my actions until I know it.

24. If Certainties have any active virtue, it is to generate one another; all our rules of logic ſhow that ſome truths are ſuch in conſequence of other truths: if it certainly will rain to-morrow, it is certain there will be clouds in the air; if it be certain the gun I make tryal of will go off, then the flint will certainly ſtrike fire; and in general the certainty of Events infers the certainty of all cauſes operating to produce them: therefore whatever acts of my Freewill are certain, I muſt certainly have the freedom to do them.

We may indeed frame propoſitions concerning future events, without thinking of the manner how they will come to paſs; but remember your own obſervation, that knowledge does not make certainty, but finds it; much leſs can any form of words make, or the omiſſion of them deſtroy it: therefore whether you ſpeak and think of them or no, the ſame propoſitions may be applied, and the ſame certainty belong to the operating cauſes, be they Force or Freewill, as to the events, and the certainty of each reciprocally, implies the other.

Suppoſe you under an engagement to meet a perſon at any particular place, and have a ſtrong

ſtrong inclination to go ſomewhere elſe, nevertheleſs you have too much honour to break your word; but perhaps the man will ſend five minutes hence to releaſe you from the engagement, and then you will go where you like: now if it be certain you ſhall go there, muſt it not be equally certain the reſtraint will be taken off, and you ſet at perfect liberty to follow your choice? And if any body had affirmed both a thouſand years ago, he would have ſpoken truth; for while the one remained fortuitous, the other could not be certain; ſo likewiſe in all inſtances of free Agency, the certainty of the action caſts a certainty upon the freedom of the Agent; and the certain Foreknowledge of our voluntary proceedings is ſo far from overthrowing, that it eſtabliſhes human liberty upon a firmer bottom than it has really belonging to it.

For we may obſerve further, that this argument unluckily proves too much; becauſe if whatever ſhall happen it be abſolutely impoſſible that it ſhould not happen; then in ſuch inſtances wherein we have our freedom, the debarring us the uſe of it was from all eternity an abſolute impoſſibility, inſurmountable even by Omnipotence itſelf; ſo that inſtead of being dependent in all our motions upon neceſſary cauſes, we ſhall become

come independent on the firſt, the ſupreme Fountain of all power and action.

And for ought I know, the Devil might have employed this ſophiſm when he rebelled, to prove himſelf his own maſter; for feeling himſelf in poſſeſſion of freedom, it was always true, that he ſhould be free; nor could Omnipotence itſelf prevent his being ſo: or he might have beguiled himſelf into his fall, and juſtified his diſobedience, by arguing in the following manner. If any one had ſaid before I was made, that I ſhould be, he would have ſpoken truth; therefore it was certain that I ſhould be, therefore an abſolute impoſſibility that I ſhould not be; ſo God could not help creating me, nor do I owe any thanks to the Almighty for my exiſtence.

25. What dependence or countenance does this argument deſerve? which is ſuch a Drawcanſir as to cut down both friend and foe; or like a ſwivel gun, may be pointed upon any quarter, fore and aft, ſtarboard and larboard; and what is worſe, we find it generally in the hands of ſloth and depravity, turned againſt the lawful authority of reaſon and prudence.

For when men are too lazy to beſtir themſelves, or too fond of a fooliſh thing to be put aſide from it by their cleareſt judgement, they

they then catch hold of this idle pretence, what will be, muſt be; therefore why need I take pains, or deliberate at all? for my actions will have ſome certain iſſue, and if certain, it is neceſſary, and if neceſſary, the event will work itſelf out ſome how or other, without my giving myſelf any trouble to compaſs it.

But who ever argues in this manner, when they have ſome favourite paſſion to gratify? They then can ſtudy and contrive, ſet all their wits to work, and uſe all their might to accompliſh their deſigns: whereas if they think conſiſtently, there is the ſame certainty in matters of inclination, as of prudence and duty; whatever they wiſh, muſt have ſome certain iſſue one way or other, and is either unattainable in ſpite of their utmoſt endeavours, or will drop into their mouths without their ſeeking. And thus they may go on to argue themſelves out of all activity whatever, ſo as neither to take up the victuals from their plate, or move away from the fire when it burns their ſhins.

26. But theſe fantaſtical remoras do not obſtruct us in the familiar tranſactions of life, nor do they ever enter into the head of a common man. If a poor fellow has done me ſome ſignal ſervice, and I call to him—Hark ye, Tim; do you ſee that ſack of peaſe in

in the barn-floor yonder? there are a couple of guineas in it ſomewhere; if you can find them they are your own. Now I know well enough he will get the money; for he will take out every pea one by one but he will come at it; but I know as well that he cannot find it without a great deal of pains and rummaging.

Suppoſe one of your profound Speculatiſts were by, and ſhould tell him, Why, Tim, you need not put yourſelf in a hurry to go a rummaging; you may as well ſit with your noſe over the kitchen fire; for Search knows you will get the money; therefore it is a thing certain, and you muſt have it whether you do any thing, or no. This logic would hardly prevail upon Tim to ſtop his ſpeed for a moment.

Or ſuppoſe another ſubtile refiner ſets the matter in a different light: Tim, ſays he, is a mere machine in this caſe utterly deſtitute of liberty; for not only his getting the money, but his rummaging the ſack is foreknown; ſo his action is certain and neceſſary, not can he help rummaging any more than the great clock can help ſtriking. Tim being an arch fellow replies, Ay, but Maſter, for all that I could ſtay here and never meddle with the ſack, if I were fool enough to run the hazard of ſomebody elſe

getting away the money before me; and if you'll give me three and forty ſhillings to try, I'll ſhow you what I can do.

How many times a day do we foreknow our own actions, and thoſe of other people, yet feel ourſelves and perceive them free in the performance? Our liberty is ſo apparent that the Philoſopher with his microſcope, and the Ploughman with his half an eye, can diſcern it diſtinctly through the veil of Certainty and Foreknowledge: 'tis only the half-reaſoner, who hangs between both, and uſes a glaſs full of flaws, that hunts for it in vain, or ſees it confuſedly.

27. It is the crinkles in this glaſs making objects appear double, and repreſenting each individual as two diſtinct things, which produces that diſtinction urged by ſome people between human Preſcience and divine, as if one might be compatible with human Liberty, though the other were repugnant.

But why ſo? for it is not the party knowing, but the intrinſic certainty of the fact that lays the reſtraint: now as man cannot know what is uncertain, ſo neither if there were any thing abſolutely fortuitous, could it be foreknown even to God; therefore Knowledge, wherever reſiding, is alike evidence of Certainty.

Very

Very true, ſay they, where the knowledge is of the ſame kind; but our's is only conjectural; whereas that of God is abſolute: we all confeſs the human Underſtanding fallible at beſt, nor ever ſo ſure of her hits, but there remains a poſſibility of her being miſtaken; and it is this poſſibility that opens the door to Liberty.

Here, by the way, I cannot help remarking how ready ſome folks are to blow hot and cold with the ſame breath, as either ſerves the turn: if I happen in company to drop a hint like thoſe ſuggeſted in my chapter on judgement, that Certainty, mathematical Certainty, was not made for man, and that we know no more, if ſo much, than the appearances exhibited this preſent moment to our ſenſes, and the ideas actually in our thought; I am exclaimed againſt for an arrant Sceptic, a Viſionary, a Trifler, advancing things. I do not believe myſelf. What! cry they, do not we know certainly that the Judges will ſit in Weſtminſter-hall this term; that the ſervant will lay the cloth for dinner; that we ourſelves ſhall go to bed to-night? Yet theſe very people, like crafty Politicians, now the intereſts of their argument require it, can take the oppoſite ſide, and ſtrike up a coalition with the fallibility of human underſtanding in its ſtrongeſt aſſurances

aſſurances. Perhaps the Judges will not ſit, for the hall may be ſwallowed up by an earth-quake; perhaps the Servant will not lay the cloth, for he may be ſtricken with an apoplexy; perhaps we ſhall not go to bed, for the houſe may take fire. Were theſe caſualties, which depend upon external cauſes, alledged in diminution of Liberty, they might carry ſome weight; but what efficacy they can have to encreaſe it, I cannot diſcern with the beſt uſe of the microſcope.

But waving this, if bare Poſſibility may give opening enough to ſet us free, this ſame Mr. Liberty muſt be a very ſlender gentleman, to creep in at ſuch an augur-hole: yet let us conſider whether he does get his whole body through, or only thruſt in a little finger at moſt; for we have ſeen there are degrees of Liberty conſiſtent with a partial Reſtraint. When I put on my great coat and boots, I can ſtill move my limbs, though not ſo freely as before: when in town I have not the ſame liberty as in the country; I muſt not go out in my cap and ſlippers; I muſt not carry a bundle under my arm; if Elizabetha Petrowna, whom I never ſaw nor cared for, happens to die two thouſand miles off, I muſt not wear a coloured coat, for ſo the great goddeſs, Faſhion, that Diana of Epheſus, whom all the world worſhippeth, ordains; yet ſhe graciouſly

graciouſly allows me ſome latitude in my dreſs and motions; for I may go armed with a ſword I know not how to uſe, and ſaunter away the day in coffee-houſes, or ſpend the night in toſſing about a pack of cards, without offence to her delicacy.

Now I believe my antagoniſts and I, how ſlightingly ſoever we have ſpoken of human Underſtanding, ſhall agree that in ſome inſtances our Knowledge grounds upon evidence, which makes it a million to one we are in the right: and ſince an Event may be probable, as well as certain, though we do not know ſo much, it muſt then contain an intrinſic probability independent on our knowledge or conjecture. But this probability, being ſo near of kin to certainty, that the acuteſt Philoſophers could never find a criterion to diſtinguiſh them, may be preſumed to have the family ſtrength, though not in equal meaſure; and if one totally overthrows liberty, the other muſt faſten a clog upon it proportionable to the degree of the probability; ſo that in caſes of the higheſt aſſurance we ſhould find ourſelves reduced to the condition of a perſon who ſhould have ſo many weights hung about him, that one millionth part added more, would render him incapable of ſtirring at all.

28. But if this will not do, and they inſiſt upon Probability being totally different from Certainty in kind and efficacy, and that one has no force at all, though the other be irreſiſtible, let them contemplate an object, wherein they muſt needs acknowledge both perpetual Freedom and abſolute Foreknowledge; for I hope they will not deny God to be perfectly free in all his proceedings. If there be ſuch a thing in nature as freedom, where can it reſide, if not in the ſupreme Author of all powers to whom there is nothing ſuperior that might controul him? Yet I ſuppoſe they will ſcarce imagine all his meaſures ſudden, and his actions fortuitous, or that he does not know to-day what he will do to-morrow.

But if certainty infers neceſſity, then either he foreſees no better than we do, that is conjecturally, when he will ſtop the torrents of blood that overwhelm Europe, the diſtreſſes, the ruins, the havock and deſolation, that ſpread over land and ſea, and reſtore peace to Chriſtendom; or his hands in the interim remain tied to do it at one preciſe time, nor is he at liberty to advance the happy event one moment ſooner. Nay, we ſhall not ſtop here; for if a propoſition had been affirmed from everlaſting concerning any work of Providence that has been performed, it would have

have been true: therefore God from all eternity was neceſſitated to create and govern his worlds preciſely in the manner he has done; and ſo, according to the deviliſh fine reaſoning uſed at the end of §. 24. we are not obliged to him, but to the iron-handed goddeſs Neceſſity, for our life, our health, our daily bread, and all the bleſſings we receive.

Perhaps they will alledge the caſe is different here; for the acts of God are ſuch only as he had determined upon himſelf, therefore in performing them he executed his own Will: but let them remember, that they placed the neceſſity in the intrinſic certainty of the fact, not in the cauſes operating to produce it; for if they admit theſe, then the cauſe of our free actions being the freedom we have to perform them, will evidence itſelf, inſtead of proving our bondage: but, according to them, when a fact is certain, it is neceſſary; no matter why, or how, it came to be ſo; and equally certain, whether proceeding from the agent's own determination or ſome external cauſe: for if what will be, muſt be, then whatever God foreknows will be done by himſelf as well as by us, becomes alike certain, nor can even omnipotence prevent it from taking effect. Let them conſider further that every pious man eſteems it certain, that

God will reward the good and puniſh the evil-doer; that he will maintain the laws of nature, not throw all things into confuſion nor annihilate the Beings he has created. Thus human preſcience extends in ſome caſes to the divine agency. But if certainty inferred neceſſity, then either God muſt not be free to diſpoſe of us in what manner he judges proper, or it muſt remain totally uncertain how he will uſe his power.

Thus we ſee the ſame ill luck attends the argument wherever we turn it; for if it proves any thing, it proves more than it ſhould; nor can it infringe upon human liberty, without encroaching upon God himſelf.

Neither let them throw in my teeth what I have reported from Pythagoras concerning the oath of Jove; for this was only a figurative expreſſion, to denote the unchangeableneſs of the divine nature: if God has ſworn, his oath is ſacred, becauſe we know he will keep it, being not liable, like man, to change his ſentiments, or deſign one thing to-day and the contrary to-morrow; but nobody imagines him under any compulſion or neceſſity, in caſe he could be ſuppoſed at any time deſirous of violating it; ſo that when he performs, he acts with the ſame pure bounty and unlimited freedom as when he promiſes.

29. When

29. When we examine what gave riſe to this notable diſcovery of every thing certain being neceſſary, we ſhall find it ſpring from a mere quibble of words. What you will do, ſay they, you muſt do; for you cannot do otherwiſe ſo long as you are to do that, becauſe you cannot do both. Who doubts it? Therefore I allow this to be a matter of neceſſity, not of prudence; nor would I recommend it to any man to deliberate, or make trial, how he ſhall run and ſit ſtill at the ſame time, or ride on horſeback while he goes in a coach: but for all that, what ails him that he might not omit the thing he has reſolved upon, or will do, and take a contrary courſe? How ſure ſoever I am of going to bed, ſtill I may ſit up all night, if I pleaſe, for neither God nor man hinders me; but I know I ſhall not, becauſe I know it is in my option, and know what I chooſe to do: ſo my knowledge ſtands upon my freedom; for if I had it not, I might be compelled to do what I do not chuſe, and my action would be uncertain.

But my Knowledge they ſay is only conjectural. What then? does not God know it too? and does not he know likewiſe, that he has left the iſſue to my option? and whether he has given me ſo much diſcretion as will withhold me from doing a ſilly thing merely to ſhow what I can do? So theſe three

points of Knowledge, the Diſcretion, the Liberty to uſe it, and the Event, are ſo far from overthrowing that they ſuſtain and ſtrengthen one another.

The difficulties we make ſpring from our conceiving too narrowly of the divine preſcience; we conſider God as foreknowing an event ſeparately, without knowing, or without contemplating the cauſes giving it birth: in this caſe indeed the Foreknowledge muſt have a ſomething, an inexplicable fatality attending it, for elſe it could not be abſolute, becauſe there might ſome unforeſeen cauſe intervene to render it abortive. But the preſcience of God is univerſal as well as abſolute; when he knows what will come to paſs, he knows the cauſes himſelf has provided for accompliſhing it, nor can any body who conſiders the matter at all, imagine him ever ignorant or forgetful of either; nay, he knows the one, becauſe he knows the other; for if we could ſuppoſe him ignorant of the cauſes, he would not know their iſſue. Therefore in ſuch inſtances where freedom is one of thoſe cauſes, he foreknows that freedom, the motives inclining us to uſe it, and how thoſe motives will operate; and conſequently by the rule inſiſted on, it is as neceſſary we ſhould enjoy that freedom, as in what manner we ſhall employ it.

30. Nevertheleſs

30. Nevertheleſs they go on ſtill to urge, that we cannot do otherwiſe than we ſhall do, not only becauſe we cannot do both, but becauſe we cannot omit what we certainly ſhall do, and take another courſe: for an event that will certainly happen, cannot fail of coming to paſs, nor can the contrary take effect; but the divine preſcience is an irrefragable evidence of this certainty, becauſe if the thing were uncertain, the Foreknowledge could not be abſolute. Now there is no poſſibility that God ſhould be miſtaken; therefore none that any thing foreknown by him ſhould not take effect, or the contrary ſhould fall out; then it is not poſſible for us to omit whatever it is impoſſible ſhould fail of being done; ſo our power is gone; or if we have a natural ability either to do or to omit, we have no liberty to uſe it, being confined to that particular way which is foreknown.

Now if they will pleaſe to throw this curious reaſoning into the logical form of a ſyllogiſm, we may chance to ſhow them it has four terms, and therefore concludes nothing. Whatever God foreknows, it is impoſſible the contrary ſhould be done; what is impoſſible to be done, it is out of my power to do; therefore whatever God foreknows, it is out of my power to do the contrary.

I ſhall not deny major nor minor; but if the word impoſſible ſhould carry different ſences as it ſtands in either, the whole chain will become a rope of ſand, and the conſequence limp lame behind. In order to canvas this point, let us have recourſe to our preſent patroneſs Philology, to mark out the ſeveral uſes wherein we employ that term, together with others relative thereto, ſuch as, muſt, may, can, neceſſary, and the like, both in our familiar and ſerious diſcourſes.

Poſſible, relates originally and moſt obviouſly to Power; for things are poſſible as far as we have power to perform them, but no farther: and if it be aſked, Whether it is poſſible to tranſmute lead into gold? you will underſtand by the queſtion, whether it is in the power of man, by chymical proceſs, or any other art or contrivance, to effect it.

But we often apply the term where we have nothing of power in our thoughts. Suppoſe, in playing at whiſt, I have only two cards left in my hand, but muſt win both tricks to ſave the game; my partner leads a trump, and the king was turned up on my left hand; in this caſe I ſhall put down the ace with hopes of ſucceeding, becauſe it is poſſible the king may be alone. Now by poſſible, I do not mean in the power of any body, or any thing, to make the king alone,

or

or guarded: if chance ever had any power, ſhe has executed it as ſoon as the cards were ſhuffled and cut, nor has ſhe now any further concern in the affair. Therefore here the term denotes only the contingency of what other card lies in the ſame hand with the king, and is relative; for to him who holds the cards it is not poſſible they ſhould be any other than what he ſees them, though to me who do not ſee them, guarded or not guarded are equally poſſible.

On the other hand, whoever conſiders the pains I have taken on this crabbed ſubject, will think it impoſſible I ſhould throw my labours into the fire as ſoon as I have compleated them: not that he thinks any thing of my powers, or ſuppoſes me to plod on until my arm is ſo benumbed that I cannot extend it to the grate; or that I write upon cloth of aſbeſtos, which will not conſume in the Flames; but becauſe he thinks there is no chance I ſhould inſtantly deſtroy what I have been ſo earneſt to produce.

Thus Poſſible ſometimes denotes the Power or Liberty we have to do a thing, as Impoſſible does the want of it, and ſometimes only the contingency, or our knowledge or ignorance of an event, without the leaſt reference to the powers producing it. There may be different degrees of poſſibility in what manner

ner I ſhall ſpend my afternoon, according as people know more or leſs of my character, diſpoſition, or ways of employing my time; but my power and my liberty muſt be the ſame, whatever other folks may think of me, or though there ſhould be a hundred different opinions or degrees of knowledge about me. If I am under engagement to go with another whither he wants me, and ſomebody aſks which way I am bound, I may ſay, 'tis poſſible to the Exchange, or 'tis poſſible to St. James's; but this leaves me no more at liberty than if it were abſolutely impoſſible that one of them ſhould 'not be the place. Or if I want to ſpeak with a perſon whom I know not readily where he is, but am ſo ſure of finding him, that I ſay it is impoſſible but I muſt ſee him; this does not abridge or any ways alter the liberty I ſhould have to purſue or forbear my enquiries, were it poſſible my endeavours might prove ineffectual.

It avails nothing to tell us, that our knowledge at beſt can amount only to the higheſt probability of conjecture; for our buſineſs now lies with the propriety of language, and natural import of thoſe expreſſions, wherein we uſe the words Poſſible or Impoſſible. Whatever refined notions we may have in our cloſets, we leave them behind, and take up common conceptions when we go abroad

upon

upon our common tranſactions: be our cleareſt knowledge ever ſo conjectural, we eſteem it certain upon theſe occaſions. Which of us in ſetting out upon a viſit, a diverſion, or an affair of buſineſs, apprehends a poſſibility of not arriving at the place of his deſtination: yet at the ſame time does not apprehend himſelf at liberty to alter his courſe in any part of his progreſs? but if the impoſſibility of an event failing, implied neceſſity in the agent, the idea of ſuch impoſſibility, however erroneous, yet while entertained, muſt baniſh the idea of freedom; but whether it does ſo, I appeal to the judgement and hourly experience of all mankind. And if our Antagoniſts have found a new ſence in the word Impoſſible, unknown to the reſt of the world, they will do well to explain their idea in a manner enabling us to underſtand their peculiar meaning.

To conſider the other words of the like import, we ſay it may rain, or be fair tomorrow; and when we ſay this, we think nothing of any choice in the clouds, or the air to produce either weather, as the word naturally implies; for what we may do lies in our option to do, or to forbear. And it is one thing, when ſpeaking of a priſoner for debt, for whom we have juſt procured a rele[redacted] ſay, Now he may go home to his fa[redacted]

and quite another, when ſpeaking of a perſon gone out upon a tour of diverſion, we ſay, He may come home to day: in one caſe, May expreſſes the liberty he has to do as he likes: in the other, it denotes only the chance there is in what manner he will uſe his liberty; for though I ſhould know the releaſed debtor will not go home, ſtill I ſhall think he may if he will; but if I know the traveller's intention to ſtay out longer, I ſhall not think it poſſible he may come home to-day.

Nor ſhould we ſcruple to uſe the word Can upon this occaſion; for if we judge it not poſſible that he may come, it is the ſame thing as believing it certain he cannot come, yet without idea of any imbecillity or reſtraint to prevent him.

So likewiſe Muſt and Neceſſary, conſidered by themſelves, imply a force compelling to one particular action, or an unſurmountable bar againſt all others: if I muſt attend upon a tryal, I am not at liberty to ſtay away; if my health renders exerciſe neceſſary, I muſt go abroad ſome how or other, and in that caſe am neceſſitated to walk when debarred the uſe of all conveyances. But ſuppoſe a friend has ſome buſineſs with me, which requires no ſort of haſte, but I know he loves to take the firſt convenient opportunity for diſpatching whatever

whatever he has to do: upon being aſked when I expect to ſee him, I may ſay, perhaps not to-day, nor to-morrow, nor all this week; but I think he muſt neceſſarily come before the month is out.

Nor do we ſcruple applying the ſame terms to things inanimate, which though really neceſſary agents, we generally conceive and ſpeak of as having powers and liberty. Water compreſſed in a fire engine muſt neceſſarily ruſh through the ſpout, being forced to mount upwards againſt its nature, and becauſe it can find none other vent. But if a careleſs ſervant does not mind to thruſt the ſpigot faſt into the barrel, the beer muſt neceſſarily run all away: in uſing this expreſſion, we think nothing of the force of gravitation impelling bodies downwards, but only the certainty of the miſchief enſuing which we apprehend; for that the liquor being left to its liberty will follow the natural propenſity it has to deſcend, and will exert a power to drive away the looſe ſpigot obſtructing its paſſage.

31. Any body with a little attention, may recollect a thouſand inſtances wherein the impoſſibility of an event not coming to paſs, implies no more than a denial of all hazard that it may not come to paſs; which is neither an affirmation nor denial of power or freedom

freedom in the cauſes bringing it forth to produce the contrary. Therefore in caſes where we need not, or lie under no neceſſity of doing a thing, where we can, and may, and it is eaſily poſſible for us to act differently; yet we may be ſo ſure of our meaſures as that they muſt neceſſarily take effect, that they cannot, there is an impoſſibility they ſhould fail of ſucceeding, or we ſhould omit to employ them; which latter impoſſibility is a foundation ſtrong enough to ſupport the higheſt degree of Foreknowledge, and conſequently Foreknowledge may well be abſolute without putting a force upon us, or cramping us the leaſt in our liberty.

Thus have I endeavoured to reſcue mankind from ſlavery, from the dread of force, reſtraint and controul, hanging continually over them, not like Epicurus by pulling Providence from her throne, and ſetting up the Anarchy of Chance in her ſtead; but by ſhowing the conſiſtency of her government with the free uſe of thoſe powers alloted us, and proving human liberty one of the miniſters to execute her purpoſes.

If the foregoing Obſervations upon this dark and intricate Subject ſhall render it intelligible to others, and ſhall have the ſame weight upon them as they ſeem to me to deſerve: then in thoſe ſeaſons wherein, as I may

may ſay, God gives them a holiday to follow their own inclinations, they will move briſkly and chearfully, without thought of any other reſtraint than, what I hope they will never wiſh to throw aſide, Innocence and Propriety; and when he calls them to his ſervices, if they do but manage to bring their minds into a proper diſpoſition, they will find the performance of them a ſtate of perfect Freedom.

32. Nevertheleſs we have not done with our Diſputants yet, for if we can defend our Liberty againſt infringement by univerſal Providence and abſolute Foreknowledge, they change their attack upon another quarter, namely, the juſtice of Reward and Puniſhment in the ſituation of mankind we have repreſented: for, ſay they, if the Will of God be fulfilled on earth as well as in heaven, who hath ever reſiſted his Will? why then doth he puniſh? As to Reward, they find no fault with that being conferred upon them unmerited, ſo the only difficulty remains with reſpect to puniſhment; and in order to anſwer their queſtion, let us examine what is the proper and natural foundation of Puniſhment.

Men are apt enough to inflict it for injuries received, with none other view than to wreak their reſentment; and the Righteous, when having moſt compleatly maſtered their paſſions,

ſions, ſtill feel an abhorrence riſe in their breaſts againſt enormous crimes, although no ways affecting themſelves, nor capable of hurting them. What then, is this Reſentment and this Abhorrence innate? Suppoſe they were, yet we cannot aſcribe our paſſions and averſions to the Almighty, or imagine him puniſhing in order to remove a loathſome object from his ſight which it gives him pain to behold. But Mr. Locke has long ſince exploded the doctrine of innate Ideas, and if the idea of Injury was acquired, thoſe of Reſentment and Abhorrence, being its offspring, muſt be younger.

In our chapter on the Paſſions we have traced Anger to its origin, and found it derived from Expedience; for children having often relieved themſelves from whatever oppreſſed them by a violent exertion of their power againſt the cauſe of it, contract a habit of violence, and practiſe it afterwards without view to the conſequences; ſatisfaction being tranſlated from the end to the means.

The abhorrence of villainy, as well when propoſed to ourſelves, as practiſed by others, is one of the moral ſenſes, which we have ſhown in the proper place, iſſue from the ſame fountain: they may indeed be conveyed to particular perſons by education, by precept, by example, and ſympathy; but whoever ac-

quired them firſt, learned them by obſervation of their neceſſary tendency to good order and happineſs, and by experience of the miſchiefs reſulting from thoſe practiſes they would reſtrain. The frequent view of theſe good effects caſts a value upon the ſentiments producing them, and the tranſlation being once compleatly made, deſire fixes upon them as upon its ultimate object.

We find judgement does the ſame with reſpect to truth tranſlated from the Poſtulata to the Problem demonſtrated: the equality between the ſquares of the two ſides and hypotenuſe in a rectangular triangle, ſerves for a baſis in mathematical and mechanical operations without our running back perpetually through the whole proceſs whereby Euclid convinced us of its being a truth. In like manner when our moral ſenſes are grown vigorous, we follow their impulſe without thinking of any higher principle firſt recommending them, and many of us without acknowledging any ſuch principle.

Now I would not by any means leſſen their influence, I rather wiſh it were ſtronger than it is, for we very ſeldom ſtand in a ſituation to diſcern the expedience of our actions, nor, where it lies any thing remote, have we ſtrength of mind enough to purſue it; but theſe moral ſenſes ſerve as excellent guides to

direct, and ſpurs to ſtimulate us towards the attainment of a happineſs that would otherwiſe eſcape us. Nevertheleſs it muſt be owned they partake of the nature of paſſion, having the like qualities, the like vehemence and manner of operation, and may be ſtiled virtuous appetites, as being the produce of reaſon and induſtry rather than of nature. They are to be ranked among the Scyons which Plato told us Urania grafted upon the wild ſtocks in Pſyche's garden; and which his maſter afterwards put us in mind were apt to run luxuriant, unleſs kept within bounds by a proper tendance.

Therefore it is one thing to conſult our rules of action for ſhaping our conduct thereby, and another to examine the rules themſelves for determining in what manner we ſhall eſtabliſh, or rectify them. For as military diſcipline conſiſts in the ſtrict ſubordination of the ſoldiers to the officers, and the officers to the general; ſo the little ſtate of man is never ſo well diſciplined as when the moral ſenſes have the entire command of our motions, but lie themſelves under controul of ſober conſideration and ſound judgement. While in the hurry of action, we have not leiſure to conſult the general, but muſt puſh bravely on whither our immediate officers lead us; nor indeed is conſultation the buſi-

neſs

neſs then, but intrepidity, vigour and alertneſs. Therefore the virtuous man acts becauſe it is right and juſt, becoming and laudable, and forbears what appears wrong and baſe, unworthy and ſhocking to his thought: he follows the motions of zeal, honour, ſhame, decency, natural affection, civility, as he feels them riſe in his breaſt; or if doubts ariſe he tries the moral ſenſes by one another, and adheres to that which carries the ſtrongeſt luſtre, and higheſt excellency in his imagination, without conſidering further why he ſuffers himſelf to be guided by their influence, or whence it was derived. For the greateſt part of mankind know not a why nor a whence, but take up their principles partly from their parents and tutors, partly from cuſtom and general eſtimation; and thoſe who do inveſtigate them to the fountain, cannot carry their inveſtigations in their head upon common occaſions.

But in ſeaſons of deliberation, when admitted into the general's tent, having the inſtructions and intelligences laid before us, and ſitting in council upon the operations of the campaign, it would be abſurd to take an officer's own teſtimonial of his merit, or give him his orders becauſe they are ſuch as he is moſt fond of executing; we are only to regard the public ſervice, what are each man's

abilities, and how he may beſt conduct himſelf to promote it. So if we have ſufficient lights and opportunity to take our moral ſenſes under examination, in order to moderate what extravagancies they may have run into, or determine the rank among them in the command of our powers; it would be no leſs prepoſterous to try their rectitude by what themſelves ſuggeſt to be right, or to ſettle their degrees of authority upon any other foundation than their ſeveral tendencies towards the general happineſs, wherein we ſhall always find our own contained.

33. Now in matters of puniſhment, when we have it in our power, let us regard the heinouſneſs of the offence, together with all circumſtances that may aggravate or abate our abhorrence of it as beheld by our moral ſenſe: but when we are to examine the foundation we have for entertaining this abhorrence, we ſhall find none other than the expedience and neceſſity of puniſhment to preſerve order, and good faith, and honeſty among mankind. Even thoſe who take private revenge, when called upon to juſtify their conduct, always plead that otherwiſe they ſhould lie open to perpetual inſults; which ſhows that the only reaſonable excuſe for reſentment is not ſtrictly the injury received, but the prevention of injuries for the future. Therefore reaſon, as well

well as authority, enjoins us to forgive our brother not only ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven, unleſs where animadverſion is neceſſary either for our own quiet and benefit, or that of others.

And there is a ſpecies of puniſhment called chaſtiſement, which has none other object beſide the benefit of the party upon whom it is exerciſed. Parents and ſchool-maſters may not be diſpleaſed at unlucky tricks played by their lads, as ſhowing a ſagacity and ſprightlineſs they delight to behold; yet they will not ſuffer them to paſs with impunity, leaſt it ſhould generate idleneſs and other miſchiefs; here is no abhorrence ſtriking the moral ſenſe, nor are the boys diſliked the worſe for their ſallies of youth and ingenuity ill applied; ſo the chaſtiſement is not for miſcarriages committed, but for future enormities which might be committed.

'Tis true the judge paſſes ſentence upon criminals by ſtated rules, becauſe he is no more than a miniſter to ſpeak the ſence of the law; but the legiſlature, in eſtabliſhing the law, regards none other rules than thoſe reſpecting the public utility; therefore equal puniſhments are appointed for offences of unequal enormity. For the law hangs for ſtealing the value of five ſhillings, but does no more for murder; and ſome go wholly un-

puniſhed, ſuch as ingratitude, intemperance, entailing diſeaſes or poverty upon families by gallantries or extravagance, becauſe they cannot be enquired into without cauſing confuſion and worſe inconveniencies. On the other hand, when the title to a throne is ſo diſputable that many honeſt well-diſpoſed perſons are drawn by mere error of judgement to take part on the unfortunate ſide; they are adjudged and executed as rebels, becauſe it is neceſſary to maintain the authority of government, and tranquillity of the ſtate.

34. Should it be objected, that this proves the contrary to what we have laid down, becauſe the law, whoſe baſis is utility, does not govern us in our eſtimation of Demerit; for we compaſſionate inſtead of deteſting the deluded malecontent, while we acknowledge the expedience and neceſſity of the law which condemns him, and think the abandoned debauchée deſerving of puniſhment which the law cannot provide for him; therefore we build our judgement upon other grounds than thoſe of utility. I ſhall anſwer, that as the law is not the ſole meaſure of juſtice, ſo neither is it the ſole fountain of utility: for be the polity of a nation ever ſo well regulated, or ever ſo wiſely adminiſtered, the people muſt ſtill do ſomething for themſelves in order to compleat their happineſs; and Providence has

reſerved

reſerved to his own management the putting a check upon ſome enormities which the law cannot reach, nor human ſagacity diſcover or prevent.

Therefore that utility which the proviſions of the law cannot totally compaſs, may ſtill remain for the foundation of private animadverſion and cenſure: nor is it a ſmall argument of its being ſo, that we naturally look upon the greatneſs of miſchief done as an aggravation of guilt in the perpetrator. If an unwholeſome potion be given to make a man ſick for a week, it is an injury; if it bring on an incurable diſeaſe, it is a more heinous offence; if death enſue, it is the crying ſin of murder.

Well, but you ſay the miſchief muſt be deſigned, or there will be no crime at all: the greater degree of miſchief is only an evidence of deeper blackneſs in the deſign; ſo that properly ſpeaking, it is not the damage done, but depravity of heart in the doer, which raiſes your abhorrence and wiſhes for vengeance; for when aſſured of the deſign, you pronounce the guilt the ſame, feel the ſame abhorrence and wiſh, although its purpoſe be utterly fruſtrated, and no damage at all enſue.

Why this is the very thing I have been contending for all along, that the true ground of puniſhment is not the miſchief done, or the

crime committed, but the prevention of future enormities, productive of future mischiefs, and this object I think may fairly rank under the claſs of utility.

We have found in the former part of this work, that the volitions giving birth to our actions depend upon the preſent motives occurring to our thought, which are either what our judgement repreſents as moſt expedient, or our imagination as moſt alluring and deſirable; and theſe motives are ſuggeſted by the opinions, the ſentiments, the inclinations and habits we have contracted: when deſire fixes upon practices of pernicious tendency, this is called a Depravity of Mind, or vulgarly, though improperly, a Depravity of Will, by a metonyme of cauſe for effect, becauſe the ſtate of the mind, and deſires in the heart, influence the Will, and of courſe produce actions conformable thereto; for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Therefore this depravity of heart being productive of bad effects, whenever the ſeaſon and opportunity ſerves to bring them to maturity, becomes juſtly odious upon account of the poiſonous fruits it bears. But as puniſhment, animadverſion and cenſure, being grievous to the party ſuffering them, tends to diſſociate deſire from the ſentiments whereto they are annexed,

annexed, and work amendment, or in other words, to give men a diſguſt for the vices rendering them obnoxious thereto; or at leaſt to reſtrain them from breaking forth into act, and diſcourage others from entertaining the like; it is this uſe which renders the puniſhment merited and juſt: for I appeal to any conſiderate perſon, whether he would puniſh, or aſcribe to a depravity of heart, any action, or ſentiment whatever, which could never do the leaſt hurt either to the owner, or any perſon in the world beſide.

35. For this reaſon freedom of action, and ſo much underſtanding as may make the party ſenſible for what the puniſhment was inflicted, are always eſteemed neceſſary requiſites to render him obnoxious thereto; becauſe puniſhment operating upon the Imagination, and through that upon the Will, where either of theſe two channels are wanting, becomes uſeleſs, and conſequently unjuſt. Therefore ſly Revenges which may be miſtaken for accidents, and nobody can know they were the effect of reſentment, though ſometimes practiſed by ſpiteful perſons, have never been holden warrantable by the judicious: nor will a righteous man puniſh where the tranſgreſſor had not liberty of choice, nor where the reaſon of his puniſhing cannot be underſtood.

If

If a brick tumbles down upon you, it would be ridiculous to fall a whipping, or breaking it, becauſe ſuch diſcipline could contribute nothing towards preventing other bricks afterwards from tumbling upon your own, or ſomebody elſe's head; but had our treatment with brickbats any influence upon their future motions, we ſhould form rules of juſtice for our dealings with them as well as with one another. When the puppy dog fouls your parlour you beat him for it; but then you rub his noſe in the filth to make him ſenſible why he is beaten; and you think this ſeverity juſtifiable, without diſcerning any depravity of heart in the beaſt, only becauſe it ſecures your rooms againſt the like diſaſter for the future: but if he has ſtolen a woodcock from the larder, and you do not diſcover the theft till next morning, when your correction can do no good, it would be cruelty to chaſtiſe him.

Miſchiefs done by mere accident are judged pardonable: but why? becauſe puniſhment has no influence upon accidents: for in ſome caſes, where better care may prevent them, we do not ſcruple to animadvert in order to ſpur men to greater vigilance: the ſtatute of Ann lays a heavy penalty upon ſervants ſetting a houſe on fire undeſignedly; nor did I

ever

ever hear that ſtatute complained of as contrary to natural juſtice.

Why are military puniſhments ſeverer than all others? Is there greater depravity in diſobedience to an officer, than to a civil magiſtrate, a parent, or a maſter? Not ſo, but becauſe the ſervice requires a ſtricter diſcipline, and a more implicit obedience. Nor can you pretend the ſoldiers conſent upon enliſting, for many of them are inveigled to enliſt by drink, or by the bounty-money, without knowing what they undertake, or conſidering the rules they ſubmit to: beſides that you ſubject the impreſſed man to the ſame ſeverities with the volunteer.

Why is the law of faſhion ſo ſtrict upon little matters, that a man would make himſelf more ignominious by wearing his wig the wrong ſide outwards, than by correſponding with the Pope, or the Pretender? unleſs becauſe cenſure, exclamation and ridicule, being the only penalties you have to enforce it, you muſt lay them on the more luſtily to keep the thoughtleſs world to decency in matters wherein they have none other reſtaint upon them.

Thus whatever ſpecies of puniſhment we fix our eye upon, we ſhall always find it de- from utility; but the deduction is too conſtantly in our heads, nor can every

every head trace it out; neither do we upon all occaſions ſtand in a ſituation to diſcern the conſequences of our puniſhing, or ſparing: therefore the judicious, from their obſervation of thoſe cauſes, ſo far as they can inveſtigate them, ſtrike out rules of juſtice, and diſtinguiſh degrees of wickedneſs, which they hang up in public as marks, or erect as poſts of direction, to guide our ſteps in the journey of life; and inculcate a moral ſenſe, or abhorrence of evil, to ſerve as a guard to protect us againſt inordinate deſires that might tempt us to injuſtice, and as a meaſure to apportion our reſentment againſt the heinouſneſs of an offence, or depravity of an offender.

Such of us as are well diſciplined look up to theſe marks continually, and ſhape their ſteps accordingly, both with reſpect to what they ſhall avoid themſelves, and what notice they ſhall take of the proceedings and ſentiments of their fellow-travellers, without thinking of any thing further; and much the greater part of us without knowing of any thing further to be thought of: when theſe latter get a ſmattering of philoſophy, you hear them declaim inceſſantly upon the eſſential and unalterable rules of right and wrong, independent on God himſelf, having a nature he did not give them, and being an obligation

obligation upon him that he muſt not break through.

36. But the all-ſeeing eye of God ſtretches wide and far, beholds all nature and all futurity in one unbounded proſpect; therefore needs no marks nor rules to direct his meaſures, nor moral ſenſes to protect againſt temptations which cannot approach him: for in every application of ſecond cauſes, he bears his ultimate end conſtantly in view, and purſues it unerringly and invariably. What this end may be, perhaps it were in vain for us to enquire, but the utmoſt point beyond which we can conceive nothing further, is the good and happineſs of his creatures: this then we muſt regard as the centre wherein all his diſpenſations terminate, and by the tendency whereto he regulates his meaſures of juſtice.

Now Puniſhment muſt be acknowledged an evil to the ſufferer while under the laſh of it, therefore unleſs we will ſuppoſe the fountain of Goodneſs ſometimes to terminate his views upon evil, we muſt allow that he never puniſhes, unleſs for ſome greater benefit to redound therefrom, either to the offender, or ſome other part of the creation. What other benefits may ariſe therefrom we know not, but we know its tendency to check or cure a depravity of heart where it is, to diſcourage the contracting of it where it is not, and conſequently

ſequently to prevent the miſchievous fruits growing from that evil root.

Therefore as men are conſtituted, this remedy is neceſſary to reſtrain enormities from abounding among them, unleſs you will ſuppoſe a miraculous interpoſition, which is not the uſual method of providence; and it is this neceſſity which juſtifies the puniſhment, and aſcertains the meaſure of it. If we go on to enquire further, why men are ſo conſtituted, this will involve us in another queſtion, which never was, and perhaps never will be determined by the ſons of Adam, namely, why pain, diſtreſs, affliction, and uneaſineſs of all kinds, were permitted at all in the world; for moral evil were no evil if there were no natural; becauſe, how could I do wrong, if no hurt or damage could enſue therefrom to any body? and is no greater than the miſchiefs whereof it may be productive. Therefore it is natural evil which creates the difficulty, and the quantity of this evil is the ſame from whatever cauſes ariſing. "Think "ye thoſe eighteen, upon whom the tower of "Siloam fell, were ſinners above all other inhabitants of Jeruſalem?" We are told, nay: yet the pain, the loſs of life, and other damages they ſuſtained, were the ſame in quantity as if they had brought down the ruin upon their own heads for their miſconduct.

Let

Let any man explain to me clearly how the permiſſion of miſchievous accidents is conſiſtent with our ideas of infinite goodneſs, and I will undertake to ſhow him by the lights he ſhall afford me, how the permiſſion of moral evil is likewiſe conſiſtent. The only ſolution of this difficulty I apprehend muſt be taken from the imperfection of our underſtanding, for we have obſerved in a former place, that infinite Goodneſs and infinite Power conſidered in the abſtract, ſeem incompatible: which ſhows there is ſomething wrong in our conceptions, and that we are not competent judges of what belongs, and what is repugnant, to goodneſs. But God knows though we do not, and is good and righteous in all his ways; therefore whatever method he purſues is an evidence of its rectitude beyond all other evidences that can offer to us for the contrary.

37. Juſtice regards ſolely the degree of depravity exiſtent, nor has any concern with the manner how it came to exiſt: a man bribed with a large ſum of money is not excuſed by the guilt of the employer, although perhaps he would never have thought of committing the crime without that temptation; and if evil communication corrupts good manners, the corruption coming through this channel does not exempt it from cenſure. The perpetration indeed of villainy

without any inſtigation or inducement, aggravates their heinouſneſs, becauſe it indicates a greater depravity of heart; but the degree of depravity once aſcertained, always ſets the meaſure to the deteſtation and demerit of the offender, without enquiring into the ſource from whence it was derived; and we ſhall find it ſo in whatever caſe we conſider maturely and candidly.

Suppoſe you and I delegated by heaven to govern ſome little diſtrict, with abſolute power of life and death over the inhabitants, with perfect knowledge of the ſecrets of their hearts, and were ſitting in council together upon the meaſures of executing our commiſſion, which we were reſolved to do with exact juſtice and integrity. Suppoſe further, what has been ſhown not to be the real fact, but in order to make our caſe the ſtronger for our preſent purpoſe, let us ſuppoſe that men had been hitherto utterly deſtitute of Freewill; but guided in all their motions by an external influence; and their ſentiments and diſpoſitions thrown upon them, without their own act, by the impulſe of neceſſary cauſes; but at the moment when we entered upon our office, this influence and impulſe were taken off, and they were put into the condition of common men, whom we

have

have converſed with in the world: how ſhould we proceed to manage with them?

In the firſt place it may be preſumed we ſhould agree upon a general amneſty for the paſt, in conſideration of the force they had lain under; and in the next we ſhould contrive meaſures for their future well-being, and finding them in poſſeſſion of powers of action, together with liberty to uſe them, we ſhould ſtudy to turn their Freewill into courſes moſt advantageous to the community. If we ſaw vices and malignity among them, we might probably feel an abhorrence and deteſtation thereof, for I do not ſuppoſe ourſelves diveſted of the moral ſenſes we had acquired before; but this ſentiment would be like that averſion we have to ſpiders, toads and adders, who did not make themſelves what they are, but received their venom and uglineſs from the hand of nature; yet I hope we ſhould be too equitable to puniſh any man merely becauſe we did not like his looks, unleſs where thoſe looks manifeſted a badneſs of heart, productive of miſchief to himſelf or his neighbours, and then we ſhould apply ſuch puniſhments, notes of infamy, or cenſures, as we judged moſt proper for preventing his ill qualities from breaking forth into act, or ſpreading the contagion elſewhere; thinking our proceedings juſtifiable by their

expedience, and regulating the meaſure of our puniſhments by their ſeveral aptneſs to anſwer the purpoſe intended.

38. If then we find that human reaſon, when acting moſt conformably to our ideas of prudence and equity, would reſtrain depravity, from whatever ſources ariſing, by adequate puniſhments, why ſhould we arraign the juſtice of God for proceeding in the like manner? For he beholds the works of his hands, and diſcerns whereof they are made, nor is he unacquainted with the operations and uſes of ſecond cauſes. He has made moral evil the general, and, as ſome believe, the ſole fountain of natural: He has given man freedom to chooſe between good and evil: He knows that vices will abound among them, which will influence them to uſe their freedom to pernicious purpoſes, and has appointed puniſhment as one of the ſprings to operate upon the human mind for reſtraining the growth of wickedneſs, and preventing its bad effects. Can we then doubt that he will employ all the ſprings of action in thoſe uſes, and upon thoſe occaſions, wherein he in his wiſdom judges them reſpectively proper? or what rule of juſtice does he violate by ſo doing?

Why he permitted moral evil, is a conſideration quite foreign to the preſent ſubject,

and

and can only produce that entanglement naturally conſequent upon blending diſcuſſions of different natures together: for whether we can reconcile that permiſſion with our ideas, or no, ſtill evil being once permitted, becomes a foundation for juſtice to ward off the bad effects that might enſue from it: for juſtice cannot ſtand at variance with goodneſs; nor can one ever forbid what the other recommends.

As the judge paſſes ſentence upon the houſe-breaker and the aſſaſſin, not in animoſity to them, but in regard to the honeſt man, that he may ſleep quietly in his bed, and go about his lawful occaſions without hazard of his life: ſo God puniſhes the wicked not in wrath and deteſtation, but in mercy and loving kindneſs, many times to the delinquent himſelf, but always either to him or his fellow-creatures.

Therefore to the queſtion, Who hath ever reſiſted his Will? Why then doth he puniſh? It may be anſwered, To ſecure the further accompliſhment of his Will, and to effect his gracious purpoſes towards thoſe whom he intended to preſerve from the like wickedneſs or the pernicious conſequences ſpringing therefrom: views wherein we cannot find the leaſt tincture of injuſtice or arbitrary proceeding.

39. But it is not enough to juſtify the ways of God, unleſs we endeavour likewiſe to obviate the perverſe conſequences men ſometimes draw from the Will of God being conſtantly fulfilled. For, ſay they, if that will always take place, then we have no Will of our own, being pinned down to one particular manner of proceeding, which it is his Will ſhould be taken.

But if human action were neceſſary, as indeed it is not, we have ſeen that would not excuſe iniquity from puniſhment, as being an application of the proper cauſe for preventing the growth and miſchiefs of it; and this perſuaſion ſufficiently inculcated, would neceſſarily, if the operation of motives be neceſſary, drive them into a courſe of thinking and acting productive of happineſs; and if they attain the poſſeſſion of this treaſure, 'tis not much matter whether they apprehend themſelves procuring it by neceſſary or voluntary agency: therefore they will do well to contemplate the penalties annexed to evil-doing; for it will do them good one way or other, if not as exhortation to work upon a free agent, at leaſt as a ſalutary medicine to rectify the diſorders in their machine.

But an event being agreeable to the Will of another, does not always hinder it from being the choice of our own Will too: what I do by

by the command of a ſuperior, while I pay him a chearful and ready obedience, is done by the Will of both. 'Tis lucky, you ſay, I ſtand ſo diſpoſed, for I muſt have done the thing had I been ever ſo deſirous of the contrary; ſo I am in the condition of a man ſitting in a room where the doors are locked upon him without his perceiving it; he is actually a priſoner, though he does not feel his confinement, becauſe he happens to chuſe the only thing he has in his power, that is, to ſtay where he is.

But what if I do a good office for an acquaintance to whom I owe no obligation, nor have other inducement than good nature? do not I gratify his Will and my own at the ſame time? Or what if an artful politician, who can ſee through and through me, leads me dextrouſly to co-operate with his deſigns: although the iſſue ſhould fall out beſide or contrary to my intention, ſtill the ſteps I am made to take by his management were the work of my own Will. So when God puts in uſe the proper cauſes for producing an event, we need not fear but he will adapt them ſo wiſely as that they ſhall not fail to accompliſh his Will; nevertheleſs, if among theſe cauſes there be the motives fit to work upon a free agent, the act performed is as compleatly the Will of that agent, as if his

ideas had derived from any other ſource, or been thrown up by the fortuitous declination of Epicurus's atoms.

The fallacy here lies in the ſame equivocation of language taken notice of in the foregoing pages, to which I refer any body who thinks it needful to reviſe what has been already offered: for the Will of God muſt be fulfilled in none other ſence than what was abſolutely foreknown, or contained in the plan of Providence, muſt come to paſs; not by compulſion or neceſſity, but by removal of all hazard to the contrary.

40. Another fond imagination may ſtart up in men's heads from the never-failing completion of the divine Will, as if it juſtified them in all the follies they have been guilty of; for, ſay they, whatever we have done muſt have been agreeable to the Will of God, becauſe having taken effect; for nothing has fallen out that was not ſo; therefore wherein have we done amiſs? for who hath ever reſiſted his Will? And they put this queſtion by way of defiance, to give any other than one certain anſwer.

But they deceive themſelves by their manner of wording the queſtion; for had it been aſked, who hath defeated his Will? we could not have produced an inſtance, nor yet would it have ſerved their purpoſe, not furniſhed an excuſe

excuse for their misconduct, that we could not: but who hath resisted his Will? is no such unanswerable question; for the Will may be resisted without success, and then come to pass notwithstanding; or it may be misunderstood, and in that case accomplished by the very endeavour to do something contrary to it.

Suppose you lend money to a friend upon his note; he being at a distance, and fully confiding in your honour, sends you a letter with the value inclosed, only desiring you will burn the note, that your executors may not find it to charge him with the debt; but before you can fulfill his request, somebody else finds the note, who having a spite against you, throws it into the fire with intention to disable you from recovering the sum contained in it: here he acts in direct opposition to your Will, his design is nothing else than to cross and thwart you; yet in so doing he does the very thing you will should be done, and would have done yourself, if he had not been beforehand with you. In like manner we may, and too frequently do, resist the Will of God, but by that very resistance accomplish it; for we act in the dark, scarce ever knowing what is his real Will, or that, its constant aim, the good of his creation, with the greatest part whereof we have no visible connection, nor

the leaſt ſuſpicion of what concern their intereſts have with our proceedings.

We have often heard of a diſtinction between the ſecret, and declared Will; the latter is ſo much as we can diſcover by the beſt uſe of our underſtanding, which being fallible, will ſometimes diſcover to us what is not the truth; yet this is the guide God has given us for our direction, and while we act conformably thereto, although the event by diſappointing our endeavours ſhould prove the ſecret Will to have been otherwiſe, nevertheleſs our honeſt, though miſtaken zeal for his ſervice, will ſtand approved in his ſight, and engage his bountiful favour towards us.

Whereas on the other hand, if we perverſely run counter to the admonitions of this guide, it will avail us nothing that our being permitted to take our courſe proves it agreeable to the ſecret Will; for God does not puniſh in anger, nor for having been diſappointed of his purpoſe; a cauſe of reſentment which can never befall him; but with the view of a phyſician who preſcribes a ſmart operation neceſſary to cure a diſtemper that would deſtroy the patient, or infect the neighbourhood. And if we regard our vicious diſpoſitions in this light, which is the true one, we muſt behold them with the ſame averſion we ſhould a loathſome diſeaſe, whether we apprehend

apprehend it brought upon us by our own miſmanagement, or inflicted by the hand of heaven; which averſion once become hearty and ſtrong, may be truſted to take its chance for the effect it will have upon our conduct.

41. For it is not ſo material to give a right judgement upon what is paſt and cannot be undone, as to take right meaſures for the future. Therefore leſt any ſhould encourage themſelves in indolence, or wrong doing, under pretence that ſince the Will of God is always punctually fulfilled, whatever ſhall be done, good or bad, muſt be conformable to that Will, ſo they need not ſcruple to take the courſes they like, being ſure to accompliſh it at all events: let them conſider, that ſince that Will ſhall take effect at all events, they may as well accompliſh it by doing right, as wrong, being equally ſure either way, that what they ſhall do will be the thing that was to come to paſs: if then the Will of God be done in both caſes, and they have their choice in what manner they ſhall accompliſh it, had they not better chooſe the manner moſt advantageous to themſelves, than one pernicious and deſtructive to them?

For our buſineſs is to purſue our own trueſt intereſts; we have nothing to do with the ſecret Will; that will work itſelf out without our ſollicitude to compleat it: the end aſ-

ſigned

ſigned us to work out, is none other than our own happineſs, to be purſued carefully and induſtriouſly, according to the lights afforded us.

Good and evil lie before us; we have powers of action, with liberty to uſe them: if our powers at any time be limited, we have ſtill ſome ſcope to range in; if our paſſions, or evil habits abridge our liberty, ſtill we may ſtrive and ſtruggle againſt them; in all caſes there is ſomething or other wherein we may exert our endeavours; let us then apply them where they may turn moſt to our benefit; but above all beware of reducing ourſelves to ſuch a deplorable condition, as that even mercy and loving kindneſs muſt lay a heavy weight of puniſhment upon us in order to effect its gracious purpoſes.

42. There is ſtill another quarter of the wilderneſs we have not yet explored, where the giant Fate ſtalks along with irreſiſtible ſtrides, bearing down the foreſt like tender blades of corn before him, forcing his paſſage through ramparts and rocks: the textures of human contrivance are but as the dewy cobwebs of autumn across his way; nor can Freewill find a place for the ſole of her foot among the heapy ruins wherewith he beſtrews the ground.

But

But before we enter into an examination of the courſes of Fate, let us, according to our uſual cuſtom, endeavour to underſtand what is properly meant by the word. We find it often confounded with Neceſſity, or the impulſive operation of neceſſary cauſes; ſo the Stratonic and Democritic Atheiſts underſtood it, when they aſcribed all events to Fate, that is, to the actions of matter depending upon one another in a continued ſeries from all eternity: and Homer's Moira cratala, ſtrong-handed fate, has been generally tranſlated by the Latin poets, dura Neceſſitas, inflexible Neceſſity.

But I conceive theſe two very different things in common underſtanding, if we may reckon Neceſſity as here uſed a common idea, for I rather take neceſſary agency to be terms belonging to the ſpeculative vocabulary; but apprehend that operations whereto they may be applicable, cannot upon that account be ſtiled the Work of Fate, in propriety of language. The circulation of ſap in vegetables, the contraction and dilation of their fibres, the action of the ſun, air and mould, contributing to make them yield their ſeveral fruits, are all neceſſary agencies: yet when a man plants a peach-tree, can you properly ſay it is therefore fated that he ſhall gather peaches and not plumbs or ſilberds therefrom? or if he

he ſows oats in his field, does he think any thing of a fatality againſt his reaping wheat or barley? So neither if we knew a collection of atoms having motions among them which muſt form a regular world, ſhould we eſteem every thing fatal that might be produced by them.

But Fate, derived from the Latin, Fari, ſignifying to ſpeak, muſt denote the word ſpoken by ſome intelligent Being, who has power to make his words good; ſo that whatever he ſays ſhall be done, will infallibly come to paſs; and does not at all relate to the cauſes or manner whereby it is accompliſhed, unleſs thoſe cauſes be made to act in conſequence of the word ſpoken.

As to the Parcæ, ſuppoſed in heathen mythology to ſpin the thread of life, and by their ſciſſars to determine the period of it, I ſhould underſtand this thread only to expreſs the ſeries of events befalling every man, not the ſeries of cauſes operating to bring them forth. And the Pagans ſeem unſettled in their notions concerning the author of Fate; ſometimes it is their Jove who fixes it by his arbitrary decree, as in the ill ſucceſſes of the Grecian army; ſometimes he is only an executive power, ſubordinate to the Parcæ, compelled by their ſpinning, to do or permit

what

what he does not like, as in the death of Sarpedon.

However, leaving them to their own imaginations, with us who acknowledge one ſupreme Governor ſubordinate to nothing nor controulable by any other Power, Fate or Deſtiny, muſt be the ſame with the decree of the Almighty; nor can we doubt that whatever he has decreed will not fail of coming to paſs.

43. But this decree works no effect of itſelf, being no efficient cauſe; for if you order your ſervant to do a thing, the buſineſs is done by the efficacy of his action, not of your's; a command given to a ſubordinate, we ſhall acknowledge compulſive; therefore if any man knows of a decree iſſued from the Almighty concerning ſomething he is to do, I ſhall never adviſe him to ſtrive againſt it, nor think himſelf at liberty to do the contrary.

But it is not this kind of decrees that are ſuppoſed to generate Fatality, which ariſes from thoſe unknown to us, confining our actions to the courſe ſuited for bringing forth the deſtined event: yet even in this caſe it is not the word ſpoken and never heard by us, but ſomething conſequent upon it that impoſes the Fatality. We are told indeed, that God ſaid, Let there be Light, and

there was Light; yet we cannot imagine the Light ſprung forth without ſome exertion of Omnipotence to produce it; for when afterwards he ſaid, Let us make man after our own image, nevertheleſs man was not made until he moulded the duſt of the earth into a human body, and breathed thereinto the breath of life: therefore when we ſay God created all things by his word, we do not underſtand that they produced themſelves out of non-entity, in obedience to the order given, nor that this order was an efficient cauſe of their exiſtence; but intend only to expreſs the facility wherewith the divine operations are performed, ſimilar to that of a man in authority, cauſing what he pleaſes to be done upon the word of command.

Very true, you ſay: nobody imagines the ſound of words ſpoken can work any thing. But when God pronounces his decree, he accompanies it with ſome act of power efficacious and irreſiſtible to enforce the execution: or he watches over the tendency of ſecond cauſes, and turns them by his ſecret influence to co-operate towards bringing forth the deſtined event: in both caſes he abridges human liberty; for what is ordained muſt inevitably come to paſs; nor can all the art or power of man turn it aſide; for the Fatality hanging over us confines our choice to one

certain

certain train of objects, or by privately counteracting us, baffles our utmoſt endeavours, when turned the contrary way.

44. This ſeems to be the ordinary way of conſidering this matter, and the concomitant exertion of power makes the difference between a decree and a command, for both are ſuppoſed to proceed from the word of God. We are told, he ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was light: we are likewiſe told, that he ſaid, Thou ſhalt not murther; thou ſhalt not ſteal; thou ſhalt not commit adultery; nevertheleſs men do ſtill murder, and ſteal, and commit adultery, notwithſtanding the word ſpoken. So the word of God operates nothing of itſelf when delivered as a command, nor unleſs when delivered as a decree: becauſe in the latter caſe only, it is accompanied with an exertion of Omnipotence, or a determination to exert it when occaſion ſhall require.

But the idea of a determination, to uſe power whenever requiſite for accompliſhing a decree, ariſes from our narrow conception of the proceedings of God taken from our own manner of proceeding, as obſerved already in §. 20. and the latter part of §. 29. For when we reſolve upon the compaſſing of any diſtant purpoſe, we can ſcarce ever lay our meaſures ſo ſurely but that they may fail

of

of the iſſue intended; ſo we are forced to watch over and correct them from time to time as we ſhall find occaſion; or accidents may intervene which will require our further endeavours to prevent their defeating our deſign; or many times we know not what meaſures are proper until we have ſeen the tendency of other cauſes, and conduct of other perſons any ways affecting the end we have in view; and then we muſt employ ſuch power and ſkill as we are maſters of, in order to bring things into the train we would have them take. From this experience of ourſelves, we are led to think the ſame of the Almighty, whom we conceive as having deſtined certain particular events, but in general left the powers of nature and free agents to take their own courſe, until they chance to take a tendency contrary to his deſigns, and then he controuls and turns them by his ſecret influence, ſo as to make them co-operate therewith.

Now a little reflection may ſhow how injurious this notion is to the wiſdom and power of God, repreſenting him as fixing indeed upon certain purpoſes, but uncertain in what manner they ſhall be brought to paſs, until the tendency his ſecond cauſes ſhall happen to take, points out the meaſures neceſſary for turning them into their deſtined courſe; and thus giving chance a ſhare in the govern-

ment

ment of the world, liable indeed to his controul, but working of herſelf whenever he does not interfere, and even furniſhing employment for his wiſdom and power, by the errors ſhe commits.

45. But when we conſider, that all events, as well thoſe eſteemed fortuitous as others, muſt proceed from certain cauſes, which derived their exiſtence and efficacy mediately or immediately from the firſt; and when we contemplate his Omniſcience, extending to every thing that can be ſuppoſed the object of knowledge, we ſhall find reaſon to convince us that nothing comes to paſs unleſs in conſequence of ſome act of his; and that whenever he acts, he knows preciſely what he does, together with the remoteſt and minuteſt conſequences to reſult from his doings.

For what bounds ſhall we ſet to his intelligence? If our own lies confined within a ſmall compaſs, it is owing to the ſcantineſs of our organs, thoſe neceſſary inſtruments of our perception. We have but two hands, ſo can touch no more than they will reach to; we have eyes only before us, ſo can behold no further than half the circle ſurrounding us: the tablet of our memory, the chart of our imagination, the line of our reflection, have their appointed meaſures, ſo we can recollect,

or calculate, or contemplate, no more than the ideas they contain.

But God perceives not by organs, neither meditates by animal ſpirits, or the little fibres of the brain, nor receives his notices by channels, whoſe number or contents might be computed, ſo as to determine the preciſe quantity they are capable of conveying. What then is there to ſet the limitation to his knowledge; or by what rule or meaſure can we aſcertain the bounds? Can he comprehend a million of ideas, and no more? Does he clearly diſcover all events to happen within the enſuing century, and no longer? Do the concerns of empires ſo occupy his thoughts, that he has none to ſpare for the peaſant, the labourer, or the beggar? Are the affairs of men ſo burthenſome to his mind, that he has no room to think of the mouſe and the wren, the emmet and the mite, the green myriads of the peopled graſs, the many-tribed weeds of the field, or the dancing motes that glitter in the noontide beams?

Since then we know of no boundaries to circumſcribe the divine Omniſcience, but that it may extend to every thing without overlooking any thing, and diſcern remoteſt conſequences in their preſent cauſes, why ſhould we ſcruple to admit that he gave being to thoſe cauſes with a view to their conſequences?

quences? and on the formation of a world diſpoſed his ſubſtances, material and ſpiritual, with ſuch properties, powers, ſituations, motions and ideas, as ſhould produce the exact ſeries of events he intended to bring forth?

In this caſe there is no occaſion nor room for controuling or altering the operation of ſecond cauſes, they being already adjuſted to anſwer all the purpoſes they were deſtined to compleat. And if there be ſupernatural interpoſitions (which I neither affirm nor deny) we cannot ſuppoſe them made upon unforeſeen emergencies to ſupply defects in the original contrivance; but comprized therein, as being judged proper for manifeſtation of the divine power and government to intelligent creatures, and worked up into one uniform plan, together with the operations of ſecondary agents.

46. In this view of the œconomy of Providence, we ſee that any abſolute decree or ſecret fatality to enforce the execution of a deſign againſt the tendency of ſecond cauſes to turn it aſide, muſt be ſuperfluous, proviſion being already made in perfect wiſdom for every event, which is to take effect, by diſpoſition of the cauſes proper to give it birth, nor will any of thoſe cauſes deviate into another tendency than that they were calculated to take.

Thus it appears, that all things fall out according to the Will and diſpoſition of God, and conformably to the ſcheme of his Providence, working for the moſt part, if not always by the miniſtry of material or voluntary agents: but the methods whereby this miniſtry is conducted are various. Some parts of the plan are accompliſhed by the choice and induſtry of man, inſtigated thereto by appetites, judgements, imaginations, deſires, obligations, dangers, and other motives; other parts are executed by the ſtated laws of nature, ſuch as the inſtinct of brutes, action of the elements, powers of vegetation, qualities of ſoils, changes of ſeaſons, and viciſſitudes of night and day; and others brought about by the courſes of fortune dependent upon the ſituations of ſubſtances, and their mutual applications upon one another, to us accidental and uninveſtigable.

But what proceeds from the two firſt of theſe cauſes, we do not uſually aſcribe to the hand of Fate: for nobody looks upon it as a Fatality that laſt winter is now ſucceeded by ſummer; that the days are long, the air warm, the corn and fruits begin to ripen, for all theſe are natural, nor could any body expect things ſhould have fallen out otherwiſe. So neither do we think a parent fated to put his ſon out to ſchool, for it was his deſire to

give

give him a good education, and his choice and judgement directed him to the proper methods for effecting it.

Therefore the laſt claſs of cauſes only remains for the province of Fate, to wit, ſuch whoſe operations are fortuitous and unaccountable, that is, beyond the reach of human foreſight and ſagacity to diſcover; nevertheleſs they muſt have ſome certain ſprings and iſſues, as well as the motions of nature or actions of men.

47. Thus the ſame events lie under the diſpoſal of Fate and of Fortune, and both terms take their riſe from our manner of conceiving things. Chance is no agent nor power, but the creature only of imagination, deriving its birth from our ignorance; for when we ſee cauſes at work, but know not their tendency, we ſay it is a chance what they will produce: therefore that which is chance to one man may be none to another, who has better information or more judgement to diſcern the train things are taking.

If a die were to be thrown, the caſt would be produced by the motions of the thrower's arm, the ſhape of the box, inequalities of the table, and other imperceptible circumſtances, of which we can make no eſtimate, therefore we deem it to lie under the power of Chance; but were the caſt to determine between two

malefactors which of them ſhould ſuffer, we ſhould then think it a matter worthy referring to the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events, for the lot cometh from the Lord; yet ſtill being uncertain what means he will employ, or what effect they ſhall take, we attribute the deciſion to his Will or Decree, ſkipping over that undiſcernible chain of cauſes lying between his firſt appointment and thoſe now in act.

Therefore Fate and Fortune ſeem for the moſt part to claim a concurrent juriſdiction, many tracts lying within the province of both: and under this apprehenſion we expreſs ourſelves upon common occaſions; for when we hear of a man falling in battle, we ſay indifferently, it was his Fate, or his Fortune to be ſlain; and of a young perſon intended to be ſent abroad, but uncertain in what buſineſs, or what place he may find opportunities for ſettling, we ſay, it is doubtful where his lot may fall, where fortune may carry him, or his fate or deſtiny fix him.

But to which of theſe powers we ſhall aſcribe the influence, depends upon the objects we take into contemplation: while we regard only the ſecret ſprings and unforeſeen incidents which may affect an event, we deem it in the hand of Fortune: but when we look

on

on further to that intelligent Being, who is the diſpoſer of all events, we conceive that thoſe ſprings will work, and incidents fall out, according to his direction and decree.

Nevertheleſs it is obvious, as we obſerved before, that a decree will work nothing without an application of power to enforce the execution of it; and when ſuch application has been made by proviſion of the proper means for bringing an event to paſs, a decree or declaration of the purpoſe intended becomes needleſs: for the requiſite meaſures being once taken, will have their effect, whether any word be ſpoken concerning them or no. Therefore the iſſues of things proceed, and fortune derives her efficacy, from the proviſion not the decree of the Almighty, from the work of his hand, not the word of his mouth; and this latter, if any ſuch there were, added nothing to the acts of Omnipotence, but muſt be delivered for ſome other purpoſe than to enſure the completion of his deſign.

48. Hence it appears, that in uſing the terms Fate, Decree or Deſtiny, we ſpeak after the manner of men; for it being cuſtomary with us, whenever we reſolve upon ſome diſtant work, to declare our intentions to perſons under our influence, who may aſſiſt in compleating it, and to fix a determination in our minds which may render us vigorous, and

keep us watchful in the proſecution, we conceive of God as making the like declared or mental determination with regard to every ſpot he compriſes within the plan of his Providence.

Then again, being ſenſible this determination cannot operate upon the courſes of fortune as a command, yet that ſomething muſt operate to put them in motion; and being unable to trace, or even to conceive a chain of cauſes extending from the firſt formation of the plan to all thoſe multifarious events, which we cannot help acknowledging muſt come to paſs by the divine appointment; we get an obſcure idea of an irreſiſtible force, a ſomething we cannot explain nor account for its exiſtence, which we call a Fatality, which perpetually hangs over ſecond cauſes, conſtraining their motions, or like an adamantine wall, confining them within their appointed courſe, from whence they would have a natural propenſity to deviate. Thus Fatality becomes disjoined from the decree, and loſes the proper import belonging to it by its derivation, being now no longer a fatum or word ſpoken, but one knows not well what; an emanation from it, like light from the ſun-beams, a power without an agent to exert it; for when God has ſpoken, his action

ceaſes

ceaſes, and the Fatality is a conſequence of what he has ſaid.

That this is the ſence, if a ſence it may be called, that men ordinarily affix to the term, appears by the Atheiſts employing it, who acknowledge no intelligent Being who might fari, that is, ſpeak or iſſue a decree: for being called upon to aſſign a cauſe for the laws and eſtabliſhments of nature, they aſcribed them to a blind Fatality, working upon the maſs of matter throughout the univerſe, and driving it into a regular form. But if we regard etymology, a blind fatality is as abſurd an expreſſion as that of a dumb decree, or an unintended deſign. The Epicureans alone diſcarded Fate upon a moſt unphiloſophical principle, that events may enſue, ſuch as the declination of atoms, without any prior cauſe whatever to produce them: but all who admitted an eternal Firſt Cauſe, whether intelligent or unſentient, ſeem to have entertained a notion of Fatality.

This confuſed and indeterminate notion opened the door to judicial Aſtrology, for though the ſtars were ſuppoſed by their poſitions to affect the lives of men, I never yet heard it attempted to be ſhown in what manner, or by what mediums they operated: but a conformity being once fancied between the ſucceſſes of human tran[illegible] af-

pects of the heavenly bodies, it was a ſhort way to talk of a Fatality, though nobody could tell why, or how, or by what channels the connection ſhould be effected.

The like may be ſaid of the Parcæ, whoſe ſinging anſwers to the decree uttered, and could have none other effect than to amuſe themſelves and lighten their taſk; but it was the thread they ſpun which determined the duration and colour of men's lives beyond the power of Jove himſelf to alter: yet we never hear of their having any communication with ſublunary affairs or acting as efficient cauſes upon any thing moving here; nevertheleſs upon their ſpinning, there inſtantly aroſe a ſympathetic energy in the cauſes at work upon earth, drawing them to produce an iſſue conformable to what was ſpun.

49. We ſee from the foregoing obſervations, how the term Fate has ſlidden off its original baſis, being departed from its firſt ſignification, that of a decree or reſolve of the Almighty to a ſomething generated thereby, an undefinable influence, reſiding neither in body, nor ſoul, nor ſubſtance, but an abſtract force or activity, hovering as it were in the air, and operating upon the cauſes of things as they ſeverally begin to act.

Nor yet do men keep always ſteady to this idea of Fate in their common converſation; for

for we often hear them talk of the Fate of a convict criminal lying in the hand of the Prince who has power to pardon or to order execution; the lover waits for the deciſion of his miſtreſs to fix his Fate; the poet talks of phyſicians iſſuing mandates in arreſt of Fate, and an unexpected accident or arrival of a timely ſuccour is thought ſometimes to change the Fate of a battle: whereas if we regard the genuine notion of Fate, it was fixed long ago by the decree of heaven; nor is it in the power of man, nor any natural agent, to determine, or ſtop, or change, or affect it in any reſpect.

Theſe variations of language do not diſturb us in our ordinary diſcourſes, for the context or occaſion introducing them moulds our words into the ſhape that is proper; but men of thought and abſtraction, deſirous of affixing conſtantly the ſame ideas to their words, find themſelves diſappointed when they light upon a term of vague and unſtable ſignification: for as we generally think in words, and their ſence in the various phraſes whereto we join them, is determined by cuſtom; we are led inſenſibly in the progreſs of our reaſonings to underſtand them differently, from whence great confuſion and perplexity muſt unavoidably enſue.

Therefore

Therefore the ſcience of language, and exact obſervation of ideas adhering thereto, would help us greatly in our diſcoveries of nature; for if men could fix upon terms not liable to variation of ſence or miſapprehenſion, their diſputes would be ſhortened, and they might quickly arrive at ſo much knowledge as is attainable by human underſtanding. We have found no reaſon hitherto to diſregard the admonitions of our preſent patroneſs Philology, they having been helpful to us upon ſeveral occaſions; and ſhe informs us, the word Fate carries a very looſe and indeterminate ſignification.

For this reaſon I wiſh it were quite expunged from the philoſophical vocabulary, and Providence ſubſtituted in its room, which I conceive would render our thoughts clearer and leſs intricate, and give them a freer progreſs when turned upon the government of the world; for the proviſions of heaven in the original diſpoſition of adequate cauſes may anſwer all purpoſes, as well thoſe accompliſhed by natural as accidental means, or the motions of free agency.

50. But men find a difficulty in conceiving of abſolute dominion, without a coercive authority or compulſion exerciſed upon the ſubjects under it: which makes us all ſo fond of power as a neceſſary means of bringing our

purpoſes to bear againſt the oppoſition of other agents which might attempt to defeat them. Yet in many inſtances, as has been remarked in §. 19. we ourſelves can make proviſion for deſigns wherein other perſons are to concur, and guide their conduct, ſo far as we know what will move them, and have the proper motives in our hands, without pretending to any authority or compulſive power over them. And if there be always ſome hazard of a diſappointment, it is becauſe we can never ſee thoroughly the exact ſtate of their deſires, nor what external accidents, ſuch as weather, diſeaſe, or the like, may diſturb the ſucceſs of our ſchemes: but were there nothing extraneous to interfere, and had we a perfect knowledge of men's minds, much more, were their inclinations and judgements of our framing, we ſhould need no deſpotic juriſdiction nor controuling power to guide them into what courſes of behaviour we pleaſed.

Now there is nothing external to the work of God. The laws of nature bringing forth her various productions were of his eſtabliſhment: the workings of chance followed from ſome determinate cauſes, though to us unknown; theſe again from other prior, and ſo on in a continual channel from the ſources firſt opened by the exertion of his power; for no event, however caſual, can happen without

out ſomething occaſioning it to fall out in that manner: the actions of men proceed according to their apprehenſions and judgements thrown upon them by their conſtitution or temperament, by education, by company and occurrences befalling them in life; all which were conveyed by nature or fortune, and therefore muſt be referred to the origin from whence they derived. For every effect muſt be produced by the action of ſome agent material or ſpiritual, or the concurrence of ſeveral, and muſt follow according to the manner of that action being exerted; which manner was determined by ſome impulſe or motive impreſſed from elſewhere; nor can we ſtop until we arrive at ſome act of Omnipotence.

Thus the face of things, as well in the moral as natural kingdoms, reſults from the qualities, poſitions, and motions God gave to his ſubſtances at the formation of a world. It remains only, that we aſk ourſelves the queſtion, whether he extended his plan to a compaſs larger than he could comprehend himſelf, or gave birth to cauſes which might produce events unthought of by him, or more numerous than he could graſp in his Omniſcience? If we anſwer in the negative, we muſt needs acknowledge that proviſion was made at the beginning for all that train of events,

events, and accompliſhment of thoſe purpoſes we have ſeen, or ſhall hereafter ſee effected.

But experience teſtifies, that this proviſion leaves many things in our power, and circumſcribes us in many other reſpects; we lay ſchemes, and take meaſures appearing certain to ſucceed, but find them fail in the iſſue, and that by accidents we could not have expected, nor can account for their happening; our reaſon deſerts us in time of need; we commit blunders, and give into follies we could not have thought ourſelves capable of: tempeſts, earthquakes, famines, peſtilences, and deſtructive diſeaſes, ariſe from no natural cauſes that we can diſcern; and our experience of thoſe things give us the notion of Fatality. Therefore Fate, if we will needs employ the term in our ſpeculations, is that part of the divine proviſion producing events which would not have enſued by the known laws of nature, nor operation of obſervable cauſes, nor contrivances of man, but are rather contrary to his endeavours.

51. Seneca, in Nat. Quæſt. Lib. II. cap. 36. defines Fate the neceſſity of all things and actions, which no force can break through: and he ſeems herein to have given Fate the import belonging to it in common propriety of language; for the courſes of

Fate are always deemed irreſiſtible and unalterable; nor do we apply the term unleſs to caſes wherein the Will and power of man has no concern.

Therefore when a perſon fails in a diſtemper, we ſay it was his Fate to die, becauſe we ſuppoſe his wiſh and endeavours were bent upon preventing it: but if he eſcapes, we do not ſay he was fated to recover, but at moſt that his Fate was not yet come, that is, has not yet operated upon him; for this was the effect of the cares taken to ſave him.

If we happen to ruin a ſcheme, we were extremely fond of accompliſhing, through ſome palpable miſconduct of our own, we think ourſelves under a fatal infatuation, becauſe every body is conceived willing to employ his beſt judgement for his own benefit; from whence comes the obſervation, that whom Jove would deſtroy, he firſt deprives of their underſtanding: but if we chance to ſucceed beyond expectation by a more than ordinary dexterity of management, we think nothing of Fatality, becauſe the unuſual clearneſs of judgement and ſucceſs conſequent thereupon, were things agreeable to our wiſh, and effects of beſtirring ourſelves in the exerciſe of our faculties.

So

So likewiſe a fatal accident is that which brings on an event, we are extremely averſe to: whereas a lucky incident is never termed fatal, becauſe tending to further our advancement towards ſomething we deſire.

But if Seneca was right in calling Fate a Neceſſity, which no force can break through, we cannot think him ſo in the extent he has given to its dominion, comprehending all things and all actions: for this ſwallows up the whole province of Freewill, to which Fate and Neceſſity, in every body's underſtanding, are counted diametrically oppoſite: for what is fated to happen does not lie in my power to prevent, and what depends upon my pleaſure and option, is yet undetermined by any Fatality.

Nor let it be thought we injure him, by taking his expreſſion too ſtrictly; for he goes on, in cap. 38. to particularize in matters belonging directly to human management. If, ſays he, it be fated that ſuch a young perſon ſhall become eloquent, it is likewiſe fated that he ſhall ſtudy rhetoric; if that he ſhall grow rich, it is fated that he ſhall trade to foreign parts. In like manner his brother Stoic, Chryſippus, inſiſts, in Tully de Fato, cap. 13. that when a ſick man is fated to recover, it is conſated that he ſhall ſend for a phyſician; to which it might be

added, and that the doctor ſhall uſe his beſt ſkill, and the apothecary diſpenſe his recipes properly.

But any common eye may ſee, that theſe Fates do not carry ſuch a neceſſity as the force of man cannot break through: for the ſcholar, if he pleaſes, may neglect his ſtudies, the young trader ſquander away his ſtock in extravagancies and debaucheries, the ſick perſon perſiſt obſtinately in refuſing help, the doctor deſtroy his patient, or the apothecary impoſe upon both by neglecting to provide good drugs, or mixing up ingredients that will do miſchief.

What then! are not eloquence, riches, and health, the bleſſings of heaven? are they not given to thoſe whom God thinks proper, and withholden from whom he pleaſes? Or can any, to whom he deſigns a favour, ever fail of receiving the effects of his bounty? By no means; nor does this conſequence follow from our rejection of Fatality: for tho' all things are not fated, yet all things are wiſely provided, ſo as to take the train requiſite for compleating whatever events were contained within his plan. Thus the orator and merchant were provided by education, example, and other natural means, with a diſpoſition for improving the talents and opportunities put into their hands; the ſick man

is provided with ſence to know the value of life, and fondneſs for its preſervation; the medical aſſiſtants with compaſſion to a fellow-creature in diſtreſs, with ſkill and diligence and a deſire to maintain their credit in their profeſſions: and theſe diſpoſitions will infallibly put them upon taking thoſe meaſures voluntarily, which they had full power and free liberty to have omitted.

Thus the Will of God is done without employing the compulſive force of Fate, or rigid arm of Neceſſity. But the difficulties that have always perplexed the ſpeculative upon this ſubject, ſpring from their not obſerving the double ſence of the word poſſible, as it relates to power or to contingency, remarked in the foregoing pages, §. 30, 31; for want of which they could not conceive how any thing could be left to the power and option of man, without inferring a poſſibility that he might defeat the purpoſes of God. But having well ſettled that diſtinction in our minds, and taking along with us that the behaviour of men follows upon their apprehenſions and ſentiments, which reſult from the ſeen and unſeen ſprings employed by God in his adminiſtration of the moral world, we may eaſily comprehend how it may be poſſible, that is, in the power of man, in many inſtances to fruſtrate his deſigns; nevertheleſs

he may ſo perfectly know what will be the deſires and thoughts of their hearts, that there is no poſſibility, that is, no danger, they ſhould purſue any other than the particular tenour of conduct moſt conducive thereto.

52. The eſſence of Fate lying in its unchangeableneſs and independence on the turns of Freewill, the powers of different perſons being various, and coming or going according as opportunity changes, there is no paradox in aſſerting, that the ſame event may be under the arbitrary diſpoſal of one man, which is fated and neceſſary to another, and may be matter of choice to-day, which was eſteemed the work of Fate yeſterday, and may be ſo again to-morrow.

Suppoſe you and I could give evidence againſt ſomebody of a capital offence unknown to any body elſe; but there being ſome favourable circumſtances in his caſe, we went into a room together to conſult whether we ſhould make the diſcovery or no: this we ſhould be apt to call ſitting to fix his Fate; and any body upon ſeeing us come out, and knowing what we had been about, might properly aſk, well, what is his Fate? is he doomed to die? But though our deciſion be reckoned Fate, with reſpect to the culprit, as being unalterable and inevitable by

by him, yet we ſhould not eſteem ourſelves under a Fatality or Neceſſity to proſecute, becauſe it would ſtill remain in our power to do it or forbear.

Marriages are commonly ſaid to be made in heaven; yet it is of the very eſſence of marriage to have the free conſent of the parties; for the ſolemnization follows upon their Will and deſire; but the cauſes influencing their choice were not of their own procurement, but extraneous and fortuitous to them. A man determined to ſettle in the world, but unprovided of his object, may think it in the hand of Fate or Fortune what qualified party he ſhall meet with; but when the acquaintance is made, the liking fixed, and matters agreed on both ſides, things proceed thence forward under the direction of Choice and Freewill: then again, if afterwards ſhe prove a ſhrew, he may chance to curſe his ſtars for ſubjecting him to ſo cruel a Fate.

The fall of Troy was ſaid to be written in the book of Fate before its foundation; yet the parties inſtrumental thereto, Paris and Helen, the Grecian Princes, the council of Priam refuſing reſtitution, acted by paſſion, contrivance, deſign, and deliberation, thoſe ſprings of free agency: and during the ſiege, the poor Trojans uſed their utmoſt efforts to

ward off the ſtroke of Fate, which nevertheleſs fell inevitably upon them.

Thus when Fate has begun his courſe, it opens at intervals to let in Freewill, who having played her part, the ſtream cloſes again, and involves all before it in irreſiſtible neceſſity.

From hence it appears, that in diſquiſitions upon this ſubject our buſineſs is to enquire not ſo much into the nature of things, as the import of expreſſions and ſtate of ideas under contemplation; and we ſhall often find that the ſame event, according to the perſons concerned in it, to the light wherein we place it, or to our conſidering the whole or ſome part only of the chain whereon it hangs, ſhall be either the work of Fate, the effect of Chance, or the product of human Induſtry, Forethought and Option. For Fate and Neceſſity being always oppoſed to free Choice, may be applicable to an Event or not, according to whoſe choice, or what act of the Will you refer it.

If I lie under the power of a ſuperiour in what manner to diſpoſe of me, the determination is Fate to me, tho' matter of choice and deliberation to him. So I may eſteem it in the hand of Fate to determine how I ſhall diſpoſe of myſelf ſeven years hence, if I cannot by any preſent act of mine certainly direct

direct my future resolves; but when the time of action comes, I shall then have it in my power and option which way to turn myself: then again, after I have executed my choice and fixed my situation, if I run back through the whole chain of causes bringing me thereinto, the opportunities enabling, and inducements prevailing on me to take the part I did, which were not of my own procurement, I may be apt to call it the work of Fate.

No wonder then that so variable and slippery a term should often present us with double lights, bewildering the most cautious traveller, like an ignis fatuus: wherefore, as I said before, it were better we could do entirely without it; for Providence seems a much clearer and steadier idea; nor are there the like difficulties in understanding how this, by the apt disposition of causes suited to each respective purpose, may generate the laws of nature, shape the windings of fortune, and produce the motives giving the turn to human volition.

53. Let us now consider how far our conduct and condition in life may be cramped and controuled by this universal provision. We find ourselves circumscribed in our powers, our knowledge, and the scope allotted us to exercise them. This nobody doubts. The severities of winter succeed the conveniencies of summer; our weight binds us down to the

earth, nor can we ſoar aloft like the ſwallow. Tempeſts, diſeaſes, and ſiniſter accidents come upon us inevitably, and many things fall out beyond our ſkill or power to prevent them: but want of ſkill and power is not want of liberty. Bars, obſtructions, and reſtraints confine us in the exerciſe of thoſe powers we have; but there is a difference between freedom of action and freedom of Will: the latter reſpects only ſuch things as we have a natural ability to perform, and againſt which there lies no impediment to prevent the ſucceſs of our endeavours. But Freewill cannot proceed without inducements to move, and ideas to direct it; therefore that proviſion which ſupplies us with theſe, is ſo far from overthrowing, that it is the baſis and ſupport of our freedom.

Nor would doubts ariſe concerning our poſſeſſion of this privilege, if we did not generally extend it beyond its proper object, which, ſtrictly ſpeaking, is none other than the preſent action in our power; but our preſent endeavours often have a tendency to diſtant purpoſes; and experience teaches us what they have been uſed to produce; therefore we eſteem the conſequences to be effected by them as under our power, and ſubjects of our option: then, if ſuch remote events fall out otherwiſe than expected, we aſcribe it to a Fatality; whereas

whereas the failure was really owing to particular circumſtances we did not attend to, or the interfering of natural cauſes we did not take into account.

More eſpecially we conceive ourſelves maſters of our own ideas, and to have the conſtant uſe of that judgement and diſcretion we poſſeſs; therefore if they fail us at any time in ſome egregious miſconduct, we apprehend ourſelves as having been under a ſecret infatuation; becauſe the proceeding being contrary to our preſent and former Will and judgement, which we can ſcarce believe could have varied ſo greatly in the interval, we conclude a force muſt have been put upon our Will to make it act ſo oppoſite to its own deſigns.

But it is well known, that our apprehenſions are not always the ſame, nor does reaſon always operate with equal vigour; imagination varies her ſcenes, diſcretion falls off her guard, fancies ſtart up, deſires intrude, paſſions beguile, and things preſent themſelves in unuſual aſpects, owing to the ſtate of our bodily humours, the mechanical play of our organization, prevalency of our habits, and appearance of external objects; all which are natural cauſes acting with a regularity undiſcernible to ourſelves. So there is no occaſion for recurring to that unſubſtantial Fata[illegible]

ſpo[illegible]

ſpoken of in § 48. for Fate is ſo much of the order of ſecond cauſes, as our Will has no ſhare in carrying on, and our Underſtanding no light to diſcover.

Thus Fate and Freewill have their diſtinct provinces, nor ever appear to clash unleſs when we happen to miſtake the boundaries; but if we eſteem events within our power which depend upon other cauſes, we may find ourſelves fruſtrated, not by a force upon our Will, but by having undertaken more, and carried our expectations further than we were warranted. For the giant Fate, though enormous in ſtrength and ſtature, never tramples upon Liberty, nor ſo covers the ground as not to leave ſome ſpace for human Agency while employed in its proper offices.

54. For we have nothing to do with Events lying within the boſom of Fate, nor are we to take our meaſures upon any thing we may fancy contained there: it may affect the ſucceſs, but cannot alter the prudence of our conduct, which conſiſts in the conformity of our actions with the beſt lights of our judgement.

If God has any ſecret purpoſe to accompliſh, no doubt he has provided cauſes to work it out; our buſineſs lies only with thoſe cauſes whoſe exiſtence and tendency we can diſcern;

diſcern; while we make the due uſe of them, ſo far as we have power and opportunity, we ſhall perform our little ſhare in the execution of his plan.

When we have determined upon our point ever ſo wiſely, and projected our ſcheme ever ſo prudently, perhaps there may be a decree to a contrary effect which will baffle all our endeavours: but this can be no guide to us, nor object of our contemplation, until manifeſting itſelf by the completion: in the mean time, if we find things take a wrong turn unexpectedly, we are not from thence to infer there is a Fatality upon them, for we cannot expect to penetrate into the ſecret workings of Fate, which are purpoſely concealed from us, but muſt employ our ſkill and induſtry to rectify our meaſures, while there remains any probability of ſucceſs, that is, until we perceive invincible obſtacles ſtanding apparently in the way.

Nor have we the leſs range of action for the ſecret ſprings of events taking their certain courſe by the divine appointment, neither would our liberty be at all enlarged, if they were ſet in motion by the fortuitous declination of Epicurus's atoms. Experience teaches that our ſtrongeſt expectations are liable to be fruſtrated, and our beſt projected ſchemes rendered abortive unaccountably; and w

Predestination.

ſtand equally at a loſs how to ward off the diſappointment whether it were to come by chance or by Fate, for we can as little conjecture what the wild workings of chance would produce, as the ſtated proviſions of wiſdom: in both caſes we can only proceed according to what we ſee, and put in uſe thoſe methods which we judge moſt expedient. Nor would it prove leſs deſtructive of care and induſtry, if we ſhould entertain a notion of luck running againſt us, than of a Fatality.

55. There is one ſpecies of Fate reſpecting the condition of each man in another life dependent on his conduct in this, commonly called Predeſtination. This, in many people's apprehenſion, carries with it the idea of a Fatality; for they ſay the Saint cannot ſin, nor the Sinner do right: yet it being obvious there can be neither right nor wrong, unleſs in things within our power and option, they ſuppoſe that though we have power to perform, we have none to chooſe; ſo there lies a force upon the Will conſtraining it to one particular choice.

But experience does not ſupport this doctrine, for the wicked now and then uſe their power well, and it is too notorious that the righteous often fail of doing the good they might. Did Peter act right when he thrice denied

denied his maſter? Or did Pilate act wrong in uſing endeavours to get Jeſus releaſed inſtead of Barabbas? and does not this manifeſt, that neither were under a conſtant fatality, but left ſometimes at leaſt at liberty to depart from their general tenour of conduct?

Then if any pretend that this general tenour, ſo far as requiſite to denominate the party good or bad, is influenced by the fatality of a decree; let them ſearch into the receſſes of the human heart, examine the judgements, deſires, imaginations harbouring there, underſtand perfectly all the natural cauſes anywiſe affecting them, and clearly diſcern that none of theſe are adequate to the effect, before they are warranted to aſſert this. Nor let them build too haſtily upon the dictates of authority, which are beſt explained by experience of facts, and are delivered in a language accommodated to the common conceptions of men, wherein we often aſcribe events to the act of God, which were the reſult of ſecond cauſes eſtabliſhed by him.

Therefore it may be true that God giveth us both to will and to do, without conſtraining our Wills by his immediate and irreſiſtible influence; as it is true, that he giveth us our daily bread, though he ſends it not by ſpecial meſſengers, as he did to Elias, but by the proviſions he made for the fruits of nature in the ſtructure

ſtructure of plants, fertility of ſoils, kindly warmth of the ſun, ſeaſonable refreſhments of dews and ſhowers, and by the proviſions he made for exerting human induſtry, and fixing an attachment to their ſeveral profeſſions in the farmer, the miller, the mealman, and the baker.

56. It muſt be acknowledged that the final ſtate of every man, as well as all other events without exception, depends upon cauſes flowing from ſprings originally provided by the Almighty; and in this light it may be ſaid that none ſhall be ſaved whoſe names were not written in the book of life: but the writing in this book, if we will employ the figure, has no efficacy, nor can limit our freedom, being no more than a declaration or record of the cauſes in act, and operations of under-cauſes flowing from them; which are equally matter of record, whether running in the channel of freewill, or of impulſe, force, and neceſſity.

And the proviſions now ſpoken of encroach leaſt of any upon the province of free Agency; a man may have his bones broken, his fortune ruined, his life deſtroyed, by earthquakes, tempeſts, plagues, or other accidents he cannot poſſibly guard againſt nor prevent; but his intereſts in futurity cannot be hurt, unleſs by ſome action he has power and liberty to forbear.

forbear. Therefore is he free in whatever he does affecting thoſe intereſts, notwithſtanding the entry recorded, or proviſion preordained; for liberty, as we have ſeen before, depends upon the act enſuing the exertion of our power, not upon any thing antecedent, nor upon the motives or cauſes inciting us to exert it: if we have talents, opportunities, underſtanding and diſcretion, we have the ſame freedom to uſe them by what means ſoever they came to us, whether by a ſudden and accidental good fortune, or by a long ſeries of cauſes preappointed for that purpoſe.

But men are led by their averſeneſs to trouble to extend the idea of their power beyond its proper bounds; they want to do ſomething to-day whereby to enſure an indefeaſible title to future happineſs, without leaving any thing for to-morrow, but to take their paſtime in the manner moſt agreeable to themſelves. This is miſtaking their province, for they can never do their work ſo compleatly but there will always remain ſomething further to do: yet this does not affect their liberty to take ſuch meaſures as at preſent are feaſible; for whatever be predeſtined concerning them to-morrow, they may ſtill do ſo much for themſelves as the actions now in their power amount to.

Therefore

Therefore it behoves us to ſtand always up-
on the watch, to obſerve every ſucceeding
moment what comes into our power, and to
employ it ſo as may turn moſt for our bene-
fit: for Predeſtination rightly underſtood, o-
perates by our hands, and the courſe we ſteer
is always that it takes upon every particular
occaſion, unleſs when it employs exter-
cauſes not under our controul, and theſe we
have no buſineſs with: where indeed we
could know the ſucceſs depends ſolely up
ſuch cauſes, our cares and endeavours were
ſuperfluous, but in matters depending up
ourſelves, our opinion or diſbelief of the
being predeſtined in the manner above
ſcribed by a proviſion of the proper
for enabling, moving and directing us
to beſtir ourſelves, makes no alteration
rule of our conduct. For if a merchant
up his ſon to induſtry, inſtructs him
myſteries of trade, and furniſhes him
petent ſtock, with a certain forekn
and determination that he ſhall ma
tune thereby: nevertheleſs the ſa
gence, the ſame circumſpection,
ſame methods of proceeding will b
as if thoſe advantages had fallen
accidentally, and the ſucceſs bee
unknown to every body.

57. But it is not enough to take off the diſcouragements againſt deliberation and activity, unleſs we quiet the apprehenſions ariſing in men's minds concerning their future proceedings: for ſome diſturb themſelves with the dread of a predetermination upon all their motions, which may turn them hereafter into the road of deſtruction, notwithſtanding the beſt diſpoſitions they find at preſent in their hearts. But let them conſider, that their preſent actions were as much predeſtined as any they ſhall perform hereafter, yet they find themſelves at full liberty to ſhape them in ſuch manner as they judge expedient; therefore they may depend upon having the like freedom at other times.

Well, but they know not what ideas may then ſtart up in their minds urging them to miſapply their powers. Is there not the like hazard attending the common affairs of life? or other events, as well as thoſe affecting the moral character, are equally predeſtined by the proviſion of cauſes ſuited to bring them forth. Yet who that lives in peace and plenty never affrights himſelf with the thought that there may be ſecret ſprings at work which may deprive him of his health, his limbs, or his ſubſtance? While things go on in a good train, and no danger diſcernible to human circumſpection threatens, we reſt co

with our ſituation, unmoleſted by imaginary terrors; and ſo we may with reſpect to our ſpiritual concerns, for virtue improves itſelf, and good habits grow ſtronger by exerciſe: therefore though our final ſtate remains in the hand of Providence, and we cannot penetrate the ſecret councils of heaven, yet the right diſpoſitions we feel at preſent, are an evidence that proviſion is made for a happy iſſue at laſt, an evidence ſufficient to exclude every thing more than a poſſibility of our failing: nor were it expedient that this ſhould be excluded, as being ſerviceable to keep us vigilant, and guard us againſt a ſupineneſs of temper that might creep upon us inſenſibly.

Beſides, let us examine wherein it would better our condition, if God were to revoke his Predeſtination, and undo his proviſion of cauſes, ſo far as relates to ourſelves: would this enable us by our preſent cares ſo to bind our future conduct as that it could never run amiſs? and if not, how would matters be mended with us? There would ſtill remain a poſſibility that after having begun well we might faint in the midway, and this event would become abſolutely fortuitous: but we ſhould hardly find more comfort in thinking that our Fate depended upon the caſt of a die than upon a Predetermination.

So

So then it might fairly be put to men's choice whether they had rather believe themſelves in the hand of Chance, or of a wiſe and gracious Governour: for the proceedings of wiſdom are regular, and tho' we know not perfectly what belongs to goodneſs, we may form a judgement thereon ſatisfactory to any reaſonable perſon; but the flighty gambols of chance are objects of no ſcience, nor grounds of any dependence whatever.

Nor ſhould we find greater ſecurity in the privilege of indifference ſo much vaunted by ſome, for this being controulable by no motives, it would avail us little to have a ſober underſtanding and virtuous inclinations moving us to take a ſalutary courſe; for our Free-will of indifference might run counter to them all, nor could we have any aſſurance what turns it might take: which muſt throw us again into all the anxieties attendant upon the dominion of chance.

Thus whatever hypotheſis we can frame, leaves as much room for apprehenſions as that of Predeſtination above deſcribed; for while we conceive it operating, not by a Fatality, but by an apt diſpoſition of ſecond cauſes, it gives as large a ſcope to human freedom and forecaſt, and induſtry, as we have reaſon from experience to think ourſelves poſſeſſed of; and as good ground of expectati[illegible]

ſucceſs of our meaſures as we are warranted in any light to entertain.

58. Nevertheleſs, if the mind appears to have taken a wrong turn, are there not juſt grounds of apprehenſion? Moſt aſſuredly. But this turn manifeſts itſelf moſt evidently in the prevalence of evil habits, and attachment to preſent pleaſures, without regard to the conſequences; therefore thoſe who ſtand in greateſt danger, are leaſt apt to take the alarm, and whoever could raiſe it in them, would do them an ineſtimable kindneſs. On the contrary, ſuch in whom diſquietudes abound, have upon that very account the leſs reaſon to entertain them; for an earneſt concern for the future being the firſt and principal ſpring provided for bringing men into the right way, where this appears ſtrongly, it is of itſelf alone an evidence that proviſion has been made in their favour.

But deſpondencies of this kind are often owing to the indiſcretion of teachers, who inſiſt too ſtrenuouſly upon higher perfections of virtue than human nature can attain, and are found to prevail moſt upon women, or perſons of ſmall ability, and in their contemplative hours rather than ſeaſons of action. For the conſolation of ſuch perſons therefore let it be obſerved, that righteouſneſs does not conſiſt in the quantity of good we do, but in

our

our doing ſo much, be it little, or be it much, as lies in our power. There are pegs and pins in a building as well as beams and columns, nor can we doubt that God diſtributes to every man the talents ſuited to the taſk he is to perform; therefore if we attend only to family affairs, or making broths for the ſick, provided this be all we had ability to do, we have compleated our part.

Let it next be remarked, that our imagination does not lie under our abſolute command to raiſe ideas there, in what ſtrength and vividneſs of colour we pleaſe: the Poet cannot always fill himſelf with inſpiration, nor the Philoſopher with his clear diſcernment of abſtracted truth, nor the religious man with his ardors and tranſports: therefore the want of a fervent faith and glowing zeal is not ſo much the mark of reprobation, as of a preſent indiſpoſition of the organs.

Let it further be remembered, that notwithſtanding what may have been inculcated of a conſtant attention to the duties of religion, our buſineſs lies chiefly in action, and the common duties of life: ſo that when perplexities overcloud us, inſtead of foreboding melancholy omens from the gloom they caſt, we ſhould rather take them as admonitions, that it is not now the ſeaſon to puzzle our brains with thinking; but to beſtir ourſelves in

ſome active employment, or purſue ſome innocent recreation, which may ſupply us with a flow of ſpirits for reaſon to work with to better purpoſe afterwards.

For if fear and trembling be a duty, a becoming confidence and juſt repoſe in the divine Goodneſs is a duty likewiſe; nor is fortitude leſs a virtue than prudence, and the proper province of both is aſcertained by their uſefulneſs. Therefore when anxieties ariſe, it behoves us to conſider what purpoſe they may anſwer; while they ſerve to keep us vigilant, and ſpur on our activity in helping ourſelves, we do well to encourage them; but when they tend to no good, nor urge us to any thing we ſhould not have done as well without them, we cannot do better than to turn our face from them, and uſe any expedient at hand to baniſh them out of our thoughts.

But Predeſtination, though formerly making much noiſe in the world, is now grown an unfaſhionable topic, nor am I ſorry that it is ſo; for though I think it might be ſo explained as to render it neither formidable nor ſubverſive of diligence, yet I fear ſuch explanation would not take effect with common apprehenſions, but they would ſtill annex to it an idea of Fatality; which muſt unavoidably nouriſh deſpondencies in phlegmatic tempers,

pers, preſumption, and fatal ſecurity in the ſanguine.

59. I have now rummaged every corner of the wilderneſs, and left no thicket untried that I could think of: it has been my endeavour to open the paſſages as I went along, and diſentangle the boughs where they had matted themſelves together, or been interlaced by perſons of an unlucky ſhrewdneſs in perplexing; ſo that the traveller may never be driven againſt the thorns without finding an opening to eſcape them, nor bewildered in mazes, without feeling a clue to direct him.

Yet I do not pretend ſo to have cleared the way, as that he may run careleſsly along; for the boughs will ſtill overhang, the paths remain dark, rugged, and intricate, and the clue put into his hands be apt to ſlip away from him: therefore he muſt not proceed in a hurry, but take every ſtep warily and circumſpectly, putting the twigs aſide that they may not ſtrike againſt his eyes, nor intercept his view of the ground as he goes along, and keeping good hold of his ſeveral clues while neceſſary for his guidance.

If I have not done my work compleatly to the ſatisfaction of every body, allowance may be made for the difficulty of the ſubject; which has foiled ſo many men of deep

thought and learning, that ſhould any thing be found here to render it clearer, I ſhould rather look upon it as a lucky hit, than any claim to extraordinary merit. For I have not pretended to manage the ſame train of argument better than other people, but have proceeded in a method of my own, which if purſued imperfectly, may ſtill ſerve as a hint, that others may improve upon to greater advantage. I have at leaſt to my own content effected a perfect reconcilement between Freewill and Univerſal Providence, and if this could be done to the general content, it would be no ſmall ſervice to the ſerious part of mankind; for neither of theſe points can eaſily be given up, nor has it hitherto been found eaſy to ſhow them conſiſtent with one another.

For our reaſon affords us ſo many grounds of aſſurance, that affairs as well in the moral as natural world, are adminiſtered by the power and wiſdom of God; and yet ſo many important events, ſuch as the riſe and fall of empires, the lives and deaths, the fortunes and diſtreſſes of men, depend upon their behaviour among one another, that we cannot but be perſuaded he governs the thoughts and actions of mankind with as full and abſolute a dominion as he does the courſes of nature. On the other hand, daily experience bears witneſs

that our motions lie under our own controul, and we can do this thing or that as we pleaſe, without any force conſtraining, or dominion compelling us to the contrary. Then upon comparing theſe two conſiderations together, while they appear to claſh, we are tempted to diſtruſt either our reaſon or our experience; and according to which part we take, either are thrown off our diſcretion and tenour of conduct by the imagination of a ſecret influence and compulſion hanging over us, or loſe our dependence upon Providence, that trueſt ſolace of our minds in time of danger and diſtreſs, and ſureſt direction of our conduct in ſeaſons of eaſe and proſperity.

Whereas were the inconſiſtency taken off, we might then allow both human agency and divine government their full extent, becauſe they might co-operate in the ſame work without interfering with each other: we ſhould ſee no diſcouragement againſt making obſervations upon the things about us relative to our conduct, and taking our meaſures accordingly with freedom, and a decent confidence in their ſucceſs; and we ſhould depend contentedly upon the guidance of Providence for turning the courſes of fortune and actions of perſons with whom we have any concern, ſo as to procure all the good intended to be beſtowed upon us.

Nay

Nay further, when we conſider that things viſible and inviſible, lie under the dominion of one governour, connecting all in one wiſely regulated polity, wherein nothing is eſtabliſhed in vain, and reflect how much of our time is loſt in ſleep and infancy, how many pains, diſeaſes and troubles fall upon us, how many unavailing hours paſs over our heads, and how often we are forced to beſtir ourſelves to very little purpoſe of our own; there is a probable preſumption that all theſe things turn ſome how or other to the account of other Beings. So that our little concerns and tranſactions may be of greater importance than we imagine, and ourſelves made unknowingly to work out the advantage of fellow-creatures, whereof we have not the leaſt knowledge, nor even ſuſpicion. Nor need we want hopes from the goodneſs of God, that we ſhall one day reap the benefit of thoſe ſervices wherein we have been made, though undeſignedly, inſtrumental.

But how ſimple and confined, or how extenſive and complicated ſchemes ſoever we may conceive contained within the divine plan, the ſtumbling block of compulſion upon free Agency being removed, we may conclude that every purpoſe comprized therein has adequate cauſes provided for its execution, and every cauſe in act, whether voluntary or

or neceſſary agent, contributes its ſhare towards the completion of ſome purpoſe.

Therefore the doctrine of univerſal Providence being, as it ſeems to me, well eſtabliſhed, I may go on without further ſcruple to raiſe what ſuperſtructure I can upon this foundation.

CHAP. XXVII.

EQUALITY.

HAIL, glorious Liberty! thou choiceſt privilege of imperial man! the prerogative by which he exerciſes his dominion over this ſublunary kingdom! Inſpire a ſpark of thy ſpirit into thy votary, who has laboured through thorns and briars to collect evidence of thy charter from all ruling Providence, impowering thee to act as one of her principal miniſters in executing her deſigns; and has produced the divine mandate to irreſiſtible Fate, commanding him to leave an ample province for thee to range in.

But where better [illegible] to dwell than in this my [illegible]

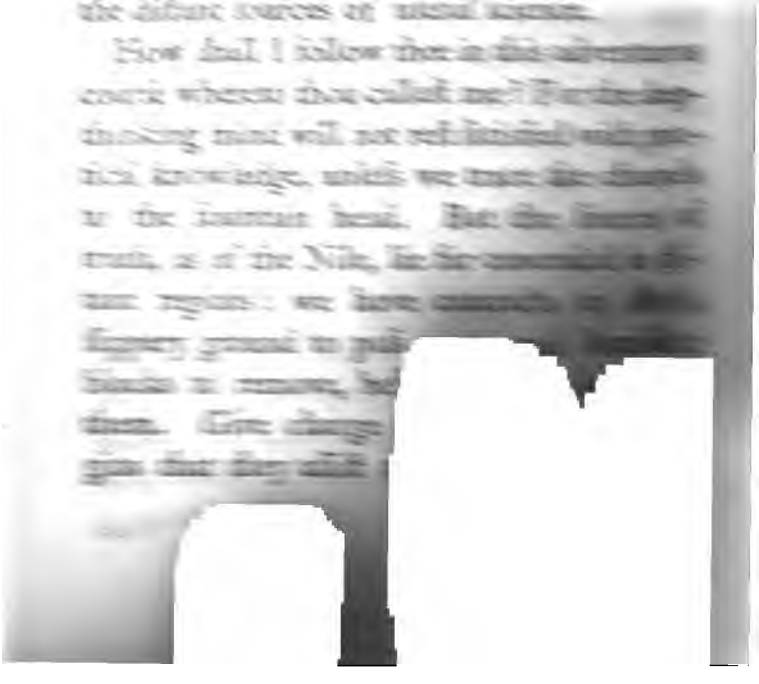
whoſe ſons in former times have ſtruggled hard for thee, enduring diſtreſſes, toils and bloody conflicts, that they might tranſmit thy bleſſings to us their children. Thou haſt ſnapped ſhort the iron rod of deſpotic ſway, broken through the enormous rule of Many made for One, and taught Power wherein its real ſtrength and true glory conſiſt. Thou haſt dragged tongue-tyed ſuperſtition at thy chariot wheels, and bound in fetters that daſtard ſlave, implicit Faith, that uſed to fetter the very thoughts of men. Thou openeſt the chambers of ſcience, burſting aſunder the Ipſe dixits that had barred up more than half the avenues. Thou cleareſt away the films from our eyes, that we may ſee for ourſelves; and ſtrengtheneſt our feet, that we may walk without the leading ſtring. O! let us never part with the valuable inheritance our anceſtors have left us. Nor, I truſt, ſhall we ever ſuffer it to be wreſted out of our hands: let us only beware that we be not beguiled by falſe appearances, nor enticed away from our goddeſs by a phantom repreſenting her likeneſs.

For there are counterfeits abroad, pretenders that aſſume thy robes and geſtures. The mimic ape Licentiouſneſs imitates thine intrepid air and confident gait. The blatent Beaſt prophanes thy daring language with his unbridled

bridled tongue. Conceited Pertneſs teaches the new-looſened ſchool-boy and novel-ſtudied girl thy ſcorn of tutorage and controul. Irreverent Methodiſm, ill-copier of thine eaſy carriage before ſuperiours, ruſhes with ſawcy familiarity into the council chamber of heaven. And lion-ſkin'd Freethinking, ſafe affector of thy bravery, inſults whom thou haſt diſarmed, ten times ſlays the ſlain, and claims to be the ſole gatherer up of thy ſpoils. They range the world with a boiſterous rabble tagging at their heels: Clamour, Arrogance, Miſrepreſentation, Perverſeneſs, Cavil, intemperate Jeſt, loud-laughing Mockery and hood-winked Miſrule. They ſpare not things ſacred nor prophane; but pluck the grey beard of old experience, tear the prelates lawn, revile the rulers of the people, nor refrain from the Lord's anointed. The unlucky monkeys toſs all about them into confuſion, and grin at the wild work they make: they ſcatter abroad firebrands and arrows, and cry, Are we not in ſport? they delight to trip up the unwary, or entangle the feeble in their webby filaments, and then chuckle with joy to ſee the perplexities they have occaſioned.

But thou, genuine Liberty, offspring of all-protecting Jove, and ſiſter of Uranian Venus who diſpenſeth his ble[redacted]orn of plenty; thou loveſt o[redacted]

thou knoweſt the world is upholden by order, and the bliſs of heaven maintained by free obedience. Therefore thou recommendeſt regularity and ſubordination to the ſons of men. Thou ſtandeſt upon law and ordinance as thy bafes: rule and authority are thy ſupporters: ſtrong reaſon and uniform prudence, the ground thou walkeſt upon. Direction and cautious Reſerve go before as thy harbingers, and wary-handed Charity departeth not from thy ſide. The modeſt virgins were they which were to [illegible]



upon the icy paths, and work a ſafe paſſage over the dangerous rocks of offence. Yet with all their care they cannot ſo plain the road as that the common traveller ſhall paſs ſecure: but the ſteepy precipice will make him giddy, the ſliding ſurface beguile his trembling ſteps, and unyielding rubs cauſe his feet to ſtumble.

O! for the warning voice of ſage Pythagoras, Hence ye prophane! That none but the hardy Adept might be admitted to tread the perilous path. But thou, Goddeſs, in theſe latter times, ordaineſt there ſhall be no concealment of myſteries. The ſons of Fauſtus now are the only prieſts of thine oracle: they lift up the voice on high, proclaiming every thing to every body: they watch in the ſtreets to gather who ſo pleaſes to accompany us in all our excurſions. So we can only caution the too curious traveller to beware for himſelf: for we are going upon a dangerous expedition, wherein we cannot enſure him againſt accidents; being to cut a courſe through unpractiſed ground from the ſources opened before. Wherefore if there be any in this wiſe generation who knows himſelf not to be an Adept, he had better let us work for a while by ourſelves, and wait for our coming down again to the old rivers lying within his accuſtomed walks. For the water may run foul and unwholeſome

through

through the new-dug channel, until being purified in its paſſage, he may find it ſuitable to his taſte and digeſtion. But if the veteran Adept, enured to toils and dangers, to range the fields of contemplation with ſteady tread and ſober boldneſs, will vouchſafe his company: let him review with us the ſources we have explored, and obſerve which way they firſt diſcharge their ſtream.

2. We have examined the human mind and found that all her motions depend upon motives, thrown upon her from external objects, or conveyed by the channels of experience, education and example, or procured by her own cares and induſtry, whereto ſhe was inſtigated by former motives. We have ſurveyed external nature, tracing effects to cauſes until we arrived at the Firſt Cauſe, the origin of all activity and efficacy; acting with full intelligence of all he does, and preconcerted deſign of whatever ſhall fall out in immediate or remote conſequence of his operation. From hence it follows that the whole ſeries of events throughout the world takes preciſely the courſe ordained by Providence: which courſe was heretofore ſuppoſed to run underground along the paſſages of a ſecret fatality, whoſe rocky banks dammed up the ſide bubblings of chance and freewill, drawing them forcibly into its own channel. But we have

have cleared away the matted weeds that overhung the ground, and laid open the veins from whence thoſe bubblings ariſe: whereby it appears that chance is the child of ignorance, for her workings proceed from certain cauſes, yet ſuch only whoſe exiſtence or tendency we want ſagacity to diſcern; that freewill needs no compulſive force to keep her ſteddy, for ſhe communicates, by antecedent and external cauſes giving birth to her motives, with the fountain whence all the other ſtreams derive.

Thus nature, chance and induſtry, become only different channels of the ſame river; and what virtues, good qualities and enjoyments, men have worked out for themſelves, were as much given them as what came without their ſeeking: ſo that whatever portion of happineſs every man poſſeſſes, is ſuch and none other than was allotted him by the divine bounty. We have ſeen reaſon likewiſe to conclude from contemplation of the divine nature, exempt from want or paſſion or humour or weakneſs, that God is righteous in all his dealings and equal in all his ways, being no reſpecter of perſons: that his mercy is over all his works, and that equity is the Attribute whereof we can have the cleareſt conception, as implying nothing [illegible] than an impartial diſtribution of [illegible]

among all creatures capable of receiving it. Since then none of us have anything beſides what we received from the divine bounty, and that bounty flows alike upon all; it follows unavoidably that there muſt be an exact equality of fortunes among us, and the value of each perſon's exiſtence, computed throughout the whole extent of his Being, preciſely the ſame.

3. This concluſion doubtleſs will ſhock the vanity of mankind, to whom happineſs itſelf is not welcome unleſs they can engroſs the monopoly of it to themſelves; and who eſteem the advantages and accompliſhments they reſpectively poſſeſs as the only bleſſings worth receiving. The politician, the ſoldier, the ſcholar, the philoſopher, the rich merchant, the poet, the player and the fidler, have a ſovereign contempt for each other's endowments in compariſon with their own: believing themſelves the peculiar favourites of fortune with reſpect to their mental capacities, and claiming an intrinſic merit to be found in none beſides. But they will all be ſcandalized to find themſelves put upon a level with the greaſy plowman, the illiterate porter, the contemptible ideot, the unenlightened ſavage and the ſcarce human hottentot. Nevertheleſs let them point out wherein we have been miſtaken in our premiſſes

miſſes or faulty in our deductions. Let them ſhow the ſingle thing they have which they did not receive; or if they worked it out for themſelves, that the talents and opportunities enabling, the diſpoſitions inclining them, were not given; and themſelves furniſhed by certain cauſes as well with inclination and ſpirit to will as with powers to do.

If there be ſome characters more agreable in the ſight of God and more deſerving of his favour than others, ſtill thoſe characters aroſe either from a happy conſtitution and temper beſtowed by nature, or from education, company and example, fallen into by good fortune; or if we ſuppoſe a particular effuſion of divine grace to make the difference, God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children unto Abraham: ſo that the ſame Power being the Author of nature, the Guider of fortune and free Diſpenſer of grace, was the origin of whatever flowed upon us thro' either of thoſe channels. When in our ſtate of non-entity, we were all equally devoid of merit or demerit, and were called forth from thence to the ſtations and properties and ſprings of action he thought proper to allot us; nor can he ſee anything to engage his favour in one man rather than another, which was not nearly or remotely the effect of his bounty.

Let them next examine their ideas of the divine nature, and from thence, if they can, aſſign a cauſe that ſhould make this bounty flow unequally. I know we are all in the hands of God to give us more or leſs as he pleaſes; nor have any of us cauſe to complain at receiving a ſmaller portion than his neighbours, for we have no demands upon him whatever: but how is it likely he does do ſo? what Attribute is there to require, or even render it probable? if juſtice requires that the virtuous ſhould fare better than the vicious, yet does juſtice hinder that the ſame meaſure of virtue ſhould be allotted to every one? But our virtues muſt be of our own acquiring, or they will not deſerve the name. Granted. Yet ſince the Will to make the acquiſition derived from above, what rule of juſtice prohibits the incitements to raiſe that Will, and opportunities to exerciſe it, from being diſtributed to all alike?

Let them further reflect that their talents and accompliſhments contribute to the protection, the benefit or the entertainment of others; their very piety and virtue, to be genuine, muſt extend their good effects beyond the poſſeſſors, to all who come within their reach: ſo that the rude rabble they deſpiſe, have a ſhare in the favours beſtowed upon themſelves; nor is there a man poſſeſſing ſome

ſome extraordinary gift which was given for his own ſake alone.

They may likewiſe conſider that happineſs is the only thing valuable, all other things being ſo in proportion as they conduce towards that: but happineſs conſiſts in the aggregate of pleaſures, or rather in the balance of that above the aggregate of pains; and by pleaſure we underſtand every ſatisfaction or complacence of mind, as by pain every uneaſineſs or diſturbance. Now it has been obſerved in a former place that we are very bad arithmeticians in the article of pleaſure, nor can keep account of one day's enjoyments, ſo as to compute the balance of them with the next, with any thing like the exactneſs we could do in our money receipts and diſburſements. For we fix our eye upon one favourite object, whoſe value we eſtimate by the eagerneſs of deſire we feel riſing towards it: but deſire often proves deluſive, or where it does not, yet purſues intenſe pleaſures; whereas it has been ſhown that thoſe of the gentler kind yield us a larger income upon the whole. That quick ſenſibility which enhances our joys and enables us to feel what would not touch another, adds pungency likewiſe to our vexations and renders us liable to ſuch as would not fall upon perſons of duller apprehenſion. And if a readineſs of reflection

tends to prolong our enjoyments: ſo likewiſe it does to lengthen our grievances. Cares and troubles enter the houſes of the great, which the vulgar know nothing of: and comforts take up their abode in the cottage, where the rich man never ſees them.

Beſides that Pleaſure being relative to Taſte and Deſire, which vary infinitely among mankind, we cannot tell what another feels by what we ſhould feel ourſelves in his ſituation. Many things delight us extremely, that he would not care a ruſh for: though we ſhould think it dreadful to want them, he may reſt fully contented without them. Labour, ſcarcity, naſtineſs, ignorance, ſubjection, and contempt, that would oppreſs us ſorely, may ſit light and eaſy upon his ſhoulders. And though an exchange of fortunes would be thought grievous to us, and deſirable by him, which ſeems to imply a conceſſion on both ſides of ours having the preference; yet is this judgement not to be depended on, as being paſſed upon the entrance into a new ſtate of life, rather than the continuance in an old one. But the common labourer raiſed to riches, or man of affluence reduced to poverty, would feel himſelf affected in another manner than one who had never known the contrary: therefore is not a competent judge of his caſe. For Nature has eſtabliſhed this rule

tending

tending greatly towards an equality, that our organs loſe their power of affecting us by uſe, both pleaſures and pains abating of their vigour upon frequent repetition. Habit and cuſtom brings us to a liking of the way of life we have long continued in, and deſire in ſome meaſure conforms itſelf to the objects uſually occuring to gratify it. From all which we may juſtly infer, there is not ſuch an immenſe difference between the happineſs of men as is commonly apprehended.

4. Could we lay aſide for a while our remembrance of the good and evil we have ſeen befalling mankind, we ſhould be apt to conclude that the pleaſures and pains, the ſucceſſes and diſappointments of all were in quantity alike. For though it be certain God may uncontrolably and lawfully deal with his creatures as he pleaſes, yet can we find no reaſon in any conceptions we can form of him, to believe he will pleaſe to deal with them arbitrarily, or partially: from whence it would follow, that the value of human life muſt be the ſame in all. But when we reſume our obſervation of what paſſes in the world, we find our theory contradicted by experience: yet this does not totally overthrow it. For though our ideas of the divine Nature be ſo imperfect, that it behoves us to correct them from time to time by experience of facts:

nevertheleſs in matters whereof we can have no experience, they remain in full vigour. Nor can we judge any thing concerning thoſe matters otherwiſe than from the beſt conception we can form of the character of that Being under whoſe diſpoſal they lie. As clearly as we may diſcover upon a full and fair examination, that the conditions of men differ leſs in value than ordinarily imagined, there will ſtill remain a conſiderable difference: nor can we help acknowledging that ſome poſſeſs in much larger meaſure, the good things of the external, the bodily, the mental, and the moral kind, than others. And in one reſpect the difference is too obvious and glaring to be overlooked. The aggregate of pleaſures conſtituting happineſs, is made up of their intenſeneſs and duration jointly, and therefore, under the ſame circumſtances of condition, muſt depend upon the length of life. From whence it follows undeniably, that children cut off in their cradles, do not receive the ſame portion as ſome perſons who hold out their full period.

But then the perceptive Spirit, ſurviving after diſſolution of the Body, remains capable of further enjoyments, which may compenſate for thoſe loſt by its haſty ſeparation. Thus we find by reaſoning from experience, that there muſt be a difference in the future conditions

ditions of men, becauſe there is in the preſent: for Equity requires inequalities hereafter to compenſate for inequalities here; and if Dives receive good things now, and Lazarus evil things, the latter muſt then be comforted, or the other tormented. But Equity requires no greater inequalities than juſt enough to balance thoſe already paſſed through: nor have we grounds to expect any greater, unleſs it ſhould appear by and by in the ſequel of theſe enquiries, that divine Juſtice requires greater differences in another life than have been made in this. Nevertheleſs the Attributes cannot claſh with one another, nor can Juſtice ever run ſuch lengths as to overthrow Equity: therefore the evils inflicted by it cannot be abſolutely perpetual; becauſe evil falling all into one ſcale, the balance can never come even, unleſs there be time left for good to pour afterwards into the oppoſite. Therefore it was, that at the end of § 2. I explained an equality of fortunes by an equal value of each perſons exiſtence computed throughout the whole extent of his Being. For tho' Equity may well conſiſt with partiality and favour in particular ſtages of Being, and with the various diſtributions of Juſtice according to the demerits of individuals: yet after Favour has had her Courſe, and Juſtice [illegible], it remains that Equity ſhould be

be ſatisfied too; which ſeems to require there ſhould be a certain period aſſigned, wherein the accounts of all may riſe to the ſame amount. But how long, or how ſhort this period may be, we cannot pretend to determine: for there lies an Eternity before us, from whereout may be cut an immenſe length of time to paſs before the balance comes even.

5. In what manner this equality ſhall be effected it may be difficult to conjecture, and impoſſible to aſcertain. If we give a looſe to imagination in purſuing the old heathen inventions, as ſketched out in the Lecture of Pythagoras in the viſion, wherein the doctrine of tranſmigration is extended, beyond this narrow earth with the men and animals crawling thereon, to all the ſtates of immerſion into matter throughout the Univerſe; I think a ſcheme may be ſtricken out, which will appear ſpecious, if not too cloſely ſcrutinized, and contain ſome particulars well worth our conſideration. For one cannot well conceive a more perfect Equality than is therein repreſented: becauſe tho' Exiſtence be divided into many various forms of Being, ſome containing a mixture of evil, and others nothing elſe, yet the ſpiritual ſubſtance, taking its turn in rotation among the ſeveral forms

forms, the fates of all will remain alike upon having paſſed through the whole.

Nor yet is it neceſſary the whole muſt be run thro' in order to level accounts; although this cannot be accompliſhed between every migration from the Spiritual Subſtance, and the return into it again. For if, as holden by all Theiſts in general, the virtuous ſhall enjoy a life of happineſs in the intermediate ſtate, and paſs from thence directly into the final; there muſt be at leaſt two journeys through matter, to bring the balance even: and this will ſtretch the balancing period to an immenſe length; becauſe the interval of abode among the Spiritual Subſtance muſt exceed that of the excurſion from it, as much as the number of unembodied ſpirits does that of the embodied. But if natural evil be the conſequence of moral, then only thoſe ſtates endowed with imperfect reaſon, liable to be maſtered by paſſion, and tempted into tranſgreſſion, will be hazardous ſtates: and thoſe of children dying in the womb, or before arriving at the uſe of reaſon, may be reckoned ſafe ſtates. But Equity ſeems to require, that after having paſſed through one hazardous ſtate, the next migrations ſhould be through the ſafe, in proportion to the number there is of them in nature, which will lengthen the period ſtill further.

6. Nor

6. Nor are theſe imaginations to be looked upon as matters of meer curioſity, fit only to amuſe the ſpeculative in an idle hour; but they may ſerve to enlarge our conception of our Almighty Governour, to give us a better opinion of his Creation, and render us more regardful of one another, and more attentive in our conduct to the good of our fellow creatures. For what can raiſe our idea higher of the Glory, the Power, the Greatneſs, the Magnificence, the Benignity of God, than to imagine his vaſt Empire, the Univerſe, fully inhabited, all ſpace, not occupied by matter, being replete with ſpiritual ſubſtance, continually receiving ſupplies of happineſs from his inexhauſtible bounty? What can better exemplify his exact Equity, and Impartiality among his children, than to deſcribe him allotting them a like ſhare of abode in all the many manſions throughout their Father's houſe? What can approach our conception of his goodneſs nearer to infinitude, or make us better pleaſed and ſatisfied with our exiſtence, than that immenſe diſproportion of good to evil diſperſed over his boundleſs dominion?

Many learned men have aſſigned the corporeal machinery whereto we are vitally united, for the origin, as they call it, of evil, or, as I ſhould rather term it, the ſole channel by which that odious ſtream is caſt upon us. I know

know that, ſo far as we may take experience for our guide, we have reaſon to believe our perceptions of all kinds, our enjoyments, as well as our pains and troubles, come upon us by the action of matter: but there is great difference between a vital union therewith, and a voluntary or occaſional application thereto, in ſuch manner and ſuch times as we chooſe to make it; between perceptions impreſſed mechanically or neceſſarily, and thoſe ſelected by ſpiritual ſubſtance, to be communicated for mutual benefit. Our Goods, our utenſils, and inſtruments of diverſion, anſwer our convenience and entertainment, while we can take them up, or lay them aſide as we pleaſe: but did they grow to our hands, we ſhould find them a great hinderance and trouble to us in all our motions. Our cloaths ſerve us to good purpoſe for protection and ornament, becauſe we can pull them off, and put on others, as we will: but were they adhering to our ſkin, we muſt endure grievous ſmart and torment to get rid of them when worn ragged. Now if we compare the ſmall quantity of matter exiſtent, with the vaſt expanſe containing it, we muſt conclude, that for every Spirit impriſoned in ſome body, or organization, there are many millions of millions lying at large in the voids between. And ſo great will be the length of our abode i

country, the ſpiritual ſubſtance, totally exempt from evil, in compariſon with our excurſion through the vale of mortality.

Nor is it a ſmall confirmation of theſe ſuppoſitions, that our cleareſt ideas of goodneſs incline us to believe, that God never terminates his views ultimately upon evil, nor ſends it unleſs for ſome greater good to be produced thereby. Then if we caſt about in our thoughts for the manner how evil may produce good, it muſt occur that our induſtry for the moſt part is employed in the avoidance of miſchief, or preſervation of what enjoyments, or means of enjoyment, we poſſeſs: ſo that a man without notion of any hurt or damage that could befall him, would have no inducement to beſtir himſelf at all, and thereby loſe all the pleaſure he feels in the exerciſe of his activity: and this might probably be the caſe with all created ſpirits, however circumſtanced. But the bare apprehenſion of miſchief, ſeen falling upon others, will anſwer the purpoſe, yet the miſchief muſt fall ſomewhere for us to ſee it: but the ſufferings of a few may raiſe an apprehenſion of it in multitudes. Therefore groſs bodies, and fine corpuſcles of matter, are diſperſed up and down, at proper diſtances, throughout the Univerſe, that there may be ſamples every where of actual ſuffering, or loſs of happineſs through ignorance

and

and miſconduct, among the ſpirits impriſoned therein, for ſpurring up the diſengaged to activity.

We may remark likewiſe, upon our own experience, that a ſmall degree of pain and diſappointment, like ſours and bitters mixed in ſauces, gives a zeſt to our pleaſures. So it is in games of chance, where the variations of luck, and oppoſition of the adverſary, furniſh the amuſement: ſo it is in ſports of the field, where the labours and difficulties of the chace create the diverſion: ſo it is in the common affairs of life, where little diſpleaſures and diſappointments hold us cloſer to the engagement; and were there a man who ſhould never meet a croſs or rub in his deſires, perhaps he would paſs his time the moſt inſipidly of any creature breathing. What then ſhould hinder but that the pure ſpirits, by applying externally to the ſenſories of the embodied and inorganized, may take ſuch ſenſations of all diſagreable kinds therefrom, and communicate them among one another, as they find requiſite to give a ſmartneſs and a poignancy to their own enjoyments? Or if they ſtand ſo happily circumſtanced as to have nothing to do for promoting or ſecuring their own bliſs, they may make it their ſole contrivance and employment to leſſen, as much [redacted] the burthens of their immerſed b[redacted]

ſame origin and capacities with themſelves. As ſome people, having nothing elſe to do, find their whole amuſement in the tendency and nurture of birds, or other animals, ſupplying them conſtantly with ſuch accommodations, and pleaſures, as they are capable of enjoying equally with themſelves. Only with this difference between the two caſes, that the former do not their work by occaſional or arbitrary operations, but by adminiſtring the laws of nature, and courſes of fortune ordained by the Almighty.

Now if any body ſhall aſk the Pythagorean how he knows theſe things to be as above imagined, the latter will aſk in return, how his antagoniſt knows they cannot be ſo: and whether if the phenomena falling under our obſervation leave an equal uncertainty on both ſides, he does not think their congruity with our beſt ideas of the divine attributes a weight inclining the balance in their favour. Nor need he be afraid of indulging ſuch imaginations, which if a miſtake, are pleaſing and innocent, or I may rather ſay, a lucky and beneficial miſtake.

7. For wherever fully entertained, they muſt effectually baniſh all pride, ſelf-ſufficiency, contempt, and claim to ſuperior merit, all malice, rancour, revenge, and hardneſs of heart: there being no intrinſic and perſonal, but

but only a circumſtantial and temporary, difference between man and man; who are all drawn from the ſame ſpiritual ſubſtance, but diverſly lodged and accommodated for the preſent, and muſt take their turn in rotation through the ſeveral habitations occupied by one another. So that the oppreſſor and the ſcorner may actually ſtand one day in the very place of the perſons they injure, or deſpiſe.

Yet this conſideration, taken partially, may be perverted to bad purpoſes: for the thought of our being intrinſically as good as the nobles and princes above us, will be more apt to engender pride than to mortify it, unleſs we reflect at the ſame time, that the black ſhoe boy, and the cinder wench, are as good as ourſelves. Neither does this reflection hinder that we ſhould behave differently to different perſons, as they ſtand circumſtanced upon earth: for order and public good require us to reſpect them according to their ſeveral ſtations, ſituations, and endowments. The Senator of ancient Rome, or Alderman of the preſent times, have always owed an obedience to the Conſul, or Mayor, for the time being, whom perhaps they might command in the ſucceeding year. And in all the changes of ſtate officers, the people are to take their directions ſucceſſively from thoſe whom

they find inveſted with power; yet perhaps without eſteeming them better qualified, or more meritorious, than others whoſe places they ſupply. For in reverencing the miniſters, we reverence the prince, who lends them his authority, when and how long he judges proper: and in paying the reſpect and honour ſeverally belonging to power, rank, learning, ſagacity, riches, and other favours of Heaven, we reſpect and honour the ſupreme Monarch, who giveth and taketh away as he pleaſes.

Nevertheleſs if the value of every one's exiſtence, computed throughout the whole extent of his being, be equal, and the ſame with our own; we ſhall retain an inward eſteem for the perſon of every man equally with ourſelves, notwithſtanding ſome adventitious temporary difference there may be between us. Juſt as if we found a perſon of our own rank and fortune, but at a diſtance from his eſtate, ſtruggling with hardſhip and diſtreſs, for want of convenient remittances; or if we ſaw one of equal underſtanding and ſagacity with ourſelves, under ſome diſtemper that ſtupified him for a while: we ſhould ſtill eſteem them both upon a par with ourſelves. And as eſteem naturally begets love, this will go a great way towards bringing us into obedience to that grand precept, both of natural and revealed Religion,

ligion, to love our neighbour as ourſelves. It will give us a fellow-feeling of all the pains, diſtreſſes, vexations, and even little diſappointments, or croſs accidents, we ſee: for upon the Hypotheſis of a rotation, we ſhall ourſelves ſtand, ſome time or other, in the ſituation wherein we behold another.

Nor can we harbour an inveterate hatred againſt any body: for Achilles and Hector, the Pope and Calvin, Charles and Cromwell, our bittereſt enemy, if we have one, and ourſelves, may chance in ſome future migration to be intimates, coparceners in intereſt, father and ſon, or huſband and wife. Or if this ſhould never happen, ſtill during our long abode in the Mundane Soul, we ſhall become boſom friends, living in perfect uninterrupted harmony, purſuing each others intereſts and pleaſures alike ardently with our own, and joining in one form of adoration to the Author of our unſpeakable happineſs. And tho' we may be forced many times to bring puniſhment, vexation, and diſpleaſure, upon others, we ſhall never do it in anger, nor willingly, nor unconcernedly, but as an unavoidable means for attaining ſome greater good, or in compliance with the rules of prudence and juſtice, founded upon expedience. For we ſhall regard vice as a diſtemper of the mind, and afford what help and comfort to

the patient the circumſtances of his caſe will admit: wiſhing well to the offender, while we deteſt the offence, as the ſymptom of a loathſome and infectious diſeaſe.

8. And as we readily think well of thoſe to whom we wiſh well, we ſhall not be ſo forward to cenſure, and calumniate, and damn one another, as many of us are; but make all fair allowance for errors and miſcarriages, and ſtrive to extend the hope of ſalvation, as far as there can be found any ſolid ground to ſupport it. Selfiſhneſs and inſenſibility to all around us, ſeem to be made the characteriſtics of high perfection in Religion: our fellow-creatures of a different language, or make, or way of thinking, or ſentiment on ſome ſpeculative point, are not thought worth our concern; but ſo we ourſelves, together with a few of the ſame orthodox ſtamp, be ſafe, the devil take all the world beſide, as deſerving victims of a divine wrath never to be appeaſed. For my part, I cannot help being ſhocked to hear with what calmneſs the moſt pious people will talk of the innumerable multitudes that are to periſh in everlaſting flames: and with what glee the Methodiſts regale upon the thought, that at the day of Judgement, the rich and mighty of this world ſhall be dragged by devils for Whitefield and his

his mob of carmen and baſket-women to trample under foot.

Nor do the Freethinkers leſs contract the pale of their Church: for tho' they affect to ridicule Satan and his brimſtone, yet they have a damnation of their own, which they ſpread as liberally, and as unreluctantly, as the fiery Papiſt, the rigid Preſbyterian, or the enthuſiaſtic Methodiſt. For they tell you that right reaſon is the only road to happineſs in this world and the next; but when you come to examine what right reaſon is, you will find it confined to their particular notions, or thoſe of a few choice ſpirits of their own caſt: and all the reſt of mankind, being infected more or leſs with bigotry and ſuperſtition, muſt inevitably fall into miſery and unhappineſs, from which God himſelf cannot reſcue them. For tho' he be merciful, incapable of revenge, nor ever angry with anybody, yet he durſt not interpoſe, for fear Dame Neceſſity, enthroned above him in her eternal and unalterable nature of things, ſhould take it amiſs.

But if we claim no more than an equality among our brethren, the children of the ſame Father, and ſubjects of the ſame Kingdom, we ſhall look upon the ſtates of ſuffering as ſinks and ceſs-pools of the Univerſe, to drain off the evil therein from all the reſt; and the

drudgery of wading thro' them, as a neceſſary ſervice to be ſhared in rotation by all alike. This of courſe will turn our prejudice the contrary way, and ſet us upon hunting for arguments to contract the number and leſſen the miſery of them, ſo far as we can find warrant in calm and impartial reaſon. And we ſhall become ſollicitous to inculcate other incitements to virtue, in order to render the neceſſity of multiplying terrors among mankind as little as poſſible. But as Charity covers a multitude of ſins and blemiſhes, ſo it likewiſe diſcovers a world of good qualities and external advantages, that eſcape the eye of the ſordid and narrow minded. Our idea of equality and rotation will make us glad to find enjoyments, valuable poſſeſſions, and excuſes for miſconduct of others, in caſes which may one day become our own: and our deſire will quicken our ſagacity in finding more of them than could be well imagined before ſetting out. We ſhall diſcern pleaſures where we could have taſted none ourſelves, comforts under burthens that would have galled us extremely, prudence in meaſures that we ſhould have eſteemed fooliſh, unavoidable miſtake in what we ſhould have judged perverſeneſs, and ſources of enjoyment we ſhould never have dreamt of.

This

This muſt redound to our own benefit, by opening a more delightful proſpect of Nature than we could otherwiſe have obtained: for we ſhall regard ourſelves as citizens of the World, intereſted in every thing paſſing there, tho' not immediately concerning us; and ſhall behold with pleaſure the various bleſſings and ſalves for every ſore, diffuſed every where, whereof we are to be partakers in ſome form of being, or other. We ſhall eſteem every thing, even vexation, diſappointment, and puniſhment, as uſeful, and conſider the miſchiefs and troubles befalling ourſelves or our deareſt friends, as the purchaſe of a portion in thoſe ſcenes of laſting bliſs, which they are a neceſſary foundation to ſupport. And as the preſſure of our grievances encreaſes, we may from thence augurate how great muſt be thoſe treaſures of happineſs, which our indulgent and tender Father judges worth our purchaſing at ſo high a price. Nor need we be diſturbed at the diſpleaſures we are forced ſometimes to bring upon one another, every unavoidable evil being a purchaſe of ſomething more valuable than the payment. I dont know whether I ſhall give offence by taking notice, that the brutes often end their lives in miſery and torment, and inferring from thence, that [redacted] terminates his views up[redacted]

them too for their payments, he will find methods of ſecuring to them likewiſe their purchaſe. This we may look upon as our warrant for thoſe ſlaughters, and hard ſervices, we put them to for our neceſſary occaſions: but will not juſtify us in abuſing them wantonly. For whatever evil we bring needleſsly either upon man or beaſt, however it may be a purchaſe for them, will purchaſe nothing for ourſelves, but what we ſhall vehemently diſlike when we enter upon the poſſeſſion.

9. Nevertheleſs I more than ſuſpect that exceptions have occurred to the Reader againſt this doctrine of rotation; for, to ſay the truth, they have occurred to me, and in a formidable aſpect: yet the advantages we have found reſulting therefrom were the temptation with me to purſue it until I could reach them. And the like purpoſe may plead my excuſe for employing it again hereafter occaſionally in the like ſervice: for whatever, whether fable, or hypotheſis, gives ſcope to ſalutary reflections and opens imagination to the reception of good ſentiments, which may find eſtabliſhment afterwards upon ſome better foundation, may be allowably applied that way. But notwithſtanding that theſe advantages give the doctrine an inviting look, while holden with their ſide towards the eye, it will ſcarce

ſcarce be judged tenable, when turned round for examination on another quarter.

For it ſuppoſes a pre-exiſtence, and a future fall of the bleſſed ſpirits into weakneſs, ſin, and miſery: both which are contrary to the generally received opinion, That our entrance into human life was the beginning of our exiſtence, and That it is appointed all men once to die, and then to judgement, whereby their fates will be fixed ſo as never more to change. But the moſt fatal and invincible objection is this, that it muſt appear ſhocking to the thought and what no man can admit the ſuppoſition of, that he himſelf, and the moſt righteous perſon ever living, ſhall, in ſome future migration, become a reprobate, a thief, a debauchee, a murtherer, prophane, ſacrilegious, atheiſtical, obnoxious to the utmoſt ſeverities of divine juſtice. For though many pious people can think with calmneſs and indifference on the multitudes of other perſons doomed to eternal puniſhment by an abſolute decree, or drawn thereinto by the unlucky circumſtances of their birth, education, and company, caſt upon them by Providence: yet if you ſuggeſt a bare poſſibility of themſelves becoming the objects of vengeance, tho' at the remoteſt diſtance of time, they feel it abhorrent to their thoughts, nor can ever bring it reconcilable with their idea of infinite

nite goodneſs. So partial are we to ourſelves, that what appears agreable to righteouſneſs, and mercy, and goodneſs, in the caſe of another, we ſee plainly cannot be ſo upon ſuppoſal of the caſe being our own! For theſe imperfections therefore we muſt reject this ſcheme of a rotation, and however it may be innocently entertained for a while as an hypotheſis, ſo long as ſerving any profitable purpoſe, we can by no means receive it as an article of faith.

10. Let us then look for ſome other way wherein to account for an equality: and this we have already found in Chap. 19 § 18. For the balance may be levelled by an amends made in value to the ſufferer, without any other perſon ſuffering at all: becauſe an encreaſe of good in one ſcale will have the like effect with a weight of evil thrown into the other. If Dives receive good things, and Lazarus evil things, the latter muſt be comforted, or the former tormented. I give this concluſion in the disjunctive, becauſe either branch will anſwer the purpoſe: although Dives had not been tormented, yet ſuch ample comforts might have been afforded to Lazarus as would have made his fortune equal upon the whole with that of the other. Nor is it at all impoſſible that God may have ſuch treaſures of mercy in ſtore, that the party receiving them ſhall ſee he was not unequally dealt

dealt with by the ſevereſt degrees of puniſhment which divine Juſtice judged fitting to inflict upon him.

Many learned and pious men hold two future ſtates, an intermediate and a final, and tho the former be a ſtate of happineſs to the virtuous, yet the bliſs of the latter will be incomparably greater. Why then may not the balance be evened by the period of ſuffering being made ſo much ſhorter than that of the intermediate happineſs, as that the quicker paſſage obtained thereby into the final, may compenſate for the evils undergone?

Or it may be that the reprobate ſhall, after a length of time which nobody can limit, be brought to a right mind by the extremity of their torments ſo as to take an utter deteſtation againſt the courſes which brought them thereinto, to feel a ſincere and ardent love of virtue, ſtronger than can be attained in this life: whereby they may obtain a higher ſeat of happineſs during the remainder of the intermediate ſtate, and ſo, like Lazarus, be comforted to a degree that will bring their fortunes equal upon the whole with thoſe who have not been tormented.

Or as ſuggeſted in the Viſion § 35, the ſtate of puniſhment may be naturally eternal, as that of fallen man was, and the compenſation brought about by a miraculous interpoſition,

ſition, or irreſiſtible grace, bringing them to a tenour of mind which may make them become objects of reward, inſtead of wrath they were before. For we muſt always bear in mind that virtue is the ſole and certain road to happineſs, as wickedneſs is to miſery; therefore if a deliverance ever be effected, it muſt be worked out by a Metanoia, which we tranſlate Repentance, that is, a thorough change of diſpoſition and character: ſo that there muſt be an equality of virtues, before there can poſſibly be an equality of fortunes.

11. It may perhaps be deemed inconſiſtent with our ideas of goodneſs to imagine that he who is the fountain of it, and in whom it is inexhauſtible, will inflict intolerable torments upon perſons who are ſo far the object of that Attribute, as that he deſigns them an equal portion of happineſs upon the whole with his beſt, and moſt favoured ſervants. But let us reflect upon what we have already ſeen in the Chapter upon that article, how imperfect our ideas of Goodneſs are, and wrong beyond our ſkill to rectify them, or diſcover in what particular point their deficiency lies. Were we to follow them implicitly, we muſt conclude there is neither pain, nor diſtreſs, nor diſappointment, nor uneaſineſs of any kind in the world: but

this

this concluſion daily experience forbids, and thereby throws us quite off our reckoning. We acknowledge God infinitely good, and the permiſſion of evil forces us likewiſe to acknowledge a mixture of it conſiſtent with infinite goodneſs: but what limitation that Attribute muſt ſet to the mixture, or what proportion to good it muſt require, we have no rule to aſcertain. The moſt we can gather with tolerable aſſurance is this, that the good muſt greatly preponderate the evil: but we know the riches of God are inexhauſtible, ſo that he may have enjoyments in ſtore for his creatures, ſufficient to compenſate either by their intenſeneſs, or duration, for the ſevereſt ſufferings we can imagine.

I know Wollaſton lays down, that there are ſome pains a wiſe man would not chooſe to undergo upon any conſideration whatſoever; and I am ſo far from contradicting him, that inſtead of adviſing anybody to chooſe, or even run the hazard of, the pains I have been ſpeaking of, I would exhort him earneſtly to uſe all his wits and diligence to eſcape them: nor do I believe any man ever did run the hazard deliberately upon the recommendation of ſuch wiſdom as our frail nature is capable of, but whenever they are incurred, it is always owing to the prevalence of folly, or corrupt appetite, overpowering, or perverting

ing the judgement. But may there not likewiſe be ſome enjoyments ſo engaging, that the wiſeman would not forego them upon any conſideration? We ſee daily how intenſe pleaſures drive men knowingly into grievous miſchiefs. For the ſtrongeſt idea always carries our choice, and it is difficult to raiſe ſo lively an imagination of what we have in proſpect, as of what we feel. The wiſe man may bring himſelf by long practice to do this better than another, yet he is ſtill but a man: and where the impreſſion either of pleaſure or pain is very ſtrong, he will ſcarce be able to find anything in his ſtores of reflection to overpower it. So all this amounts to no more, than that the preſent outweighs the future in our eſtimation.

But the wiſdom of God is greater than that of the wiſe man, and his views more capacious: to him a thouſand years are but as one day: for he ſees things in their eſſences, not by their repreſentative ideas, which the ſtrongeſt of us can raiſe no higher than the narrowneſs of his organs will permit. Therefore we cannot judge what he will chooſe for his creatures by what the wiſeſt of them would chooſe for himſelf: for he may diſcern the greateſt evils he inflicts to be no more, compared with the bliſs beyond, than the plucking a hair out of a man's beard, to a year of health, and plenty and pleaſure.

Thus

Thus much we may reſt aſſured of, that puniſhment is inflicted by the ſame God, infinitely good and gracious, and merciful, who gives rewards to the righteous: therefore there can be nothing in it not conſiſtent with goodneſs. Neither does he puniſh in anger, but for the benefit neceſſarily to reſult therefrom to the reſt of his creation: whence it follows there may be a good redounding to make the puniſhment appear eligible to infinite wiſdom, and if the good of others can render it ſo, there is leſs difficulty in comprehending that a compenſation to the party himſelf may weigh with equal force. Beſides the moſt pious perſons, who think themſelves moſt intimately perſuaded of God being infinitely good, do not ſtagger at the doctrine of puniſhment abſolutely eternal inflicted upon far the greater part of mankind, including children born out of the Chriſtian pale: if then an inveteracy of vengeance, never to be ſatisfied, nor appeaſed to all eternity, be compatible with their idea of infinite goodneſs, ſurely a temporary ſuffering to be followed ſome time or other, tho' nobody knows when, by a courſe of virtue, reconcilement, and happineſs, is much more ſo.

12. Yet there is no encouragement to evil doing upon proſpect of the ſolace to follow after an immeaſurable length of miſery: for

tho' divine wiſdom may diſcern the compenſation to be adequate, yet there are ſufferings ſo ſhocking to human nature, that no man who does not ſhut his eyes againſt them, can ſubmit to undergo them willingly upon any account: ſo there is no ground for the ſinner to avail himſelf of what ſhall happen after ſo long an interval. Moraliſts indeed exhort men continually to regard the future alike with the preſent, but there is a moderation in all things: one may ſtretch ones view too far, as well as confine it too near. He that goes along with his eye fixed upon the ground, will be liable to miſs his way, or run into danger; ſo we exhort him to look up, that he may ſee the windings of the path before him, and take direction from the bearings of the country: but if he keep gaping at the diſtant horizon, it will be as bad as to keep poring upon the ground. The proper meaſure of our regards for the future, is their uſefulneſs: for our ſpeculations and our apprehenſions, as well as our actions, ought to bear a reference to uſe. Therefore moral exhortations urge us to conſider the remoteſt conſequences of our conduct, but remain indifferent to events whereon that can have no influence. And if we are enjoined againſt an unavailing ſollicitude for the morrow, becauſe ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof: much more

muſt

muſt it be faulty to ſtretch our eye to a diſtant good beyond the reach of mortal ken, when it can only tend to make us careleſs in guarding againſt intolerable miſchiefs running along the line between to a length which cannot be computed. Since then our condition in the next life will depend upon our behaviour here, it behoves us to hold that object conſtantly in view for keeping us circumſpect and diligent in our proceedings: but what further returns of life may lie beyond the next, will not be affected by anything done now, ſo we have nothing to do, nor to think of with reſpect to them.

Or if the ſinner could be aſſured that he might purchaſe an adequate compenſation by incurring the utmoſt ſeverity of torments, there could be no prudence in accepting the terms, becauſe he can get nothing by the bargain, nor have any advantage upon the whole over thoſe who reject it: for the compenſation muſt be barely equal to the ſuffering, or the equality between him and ſuch as do not ſo purchaſe it, will be deſtroyed. For my part I had rather bear a little toothach once a month, than racking pains of the ſtone once in ſeven years, though I were aſſured the quantity of both ſhould be alike: much more had I rather eſcape ſuch racking

pains, than endure them to purchaſe a pleaſure but juſt equal to their weight.

And I believe he would ſcarce chooſe to go through the ſevere perſecutions of the primitive Chriſtians: he had rather content himſelf without that greater weight of glory they earned thereby. Yet they acted prudently, the purchaſe being much more valuable than the price demanded, and they being ſupported under the burthen of the payment by their glowing hope in the mercies of God, who was able to recompenſe them abundantly for their labours. But the ſinner will not have this hope to ſupport him, for he will ſee God only in wrath and vengeance, the amiable parts of his character will be hidden from his eyes: and when the ſoul is reduced to that worſt of agonies, not to be borne by any meer creature, ſo as to cry out, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? this is a ſituation that no wiſe man, or I may ſay no man in his ſenſes, having a juſt apprehenſion of his danger, but would do his utmoſt to eſcape. Therefore we find thoſe who are in theſe dreadful courſes, armed with an inſenſibility that ſtupifies them againſt all alarms. They can familiariſe themſelves with the thought of devils, as of a diverting ſtory, and make merry with their tortures, as with the tricks of a Harlequin: they have no feeling

ing but for the preſent, and are wholly regardleſs of what ſhall befal them in time to come: agreably to that ancient ſaying, Whom Jove would deſtroy he infatuates.

13. There may ſtill lie another exception againſt the theory of compenſation, which will be thought enough to overthrow all arguments whatever that can be produced in its favour: for many will count it heterodox, as contradicting that endleſs duration of puniſhment ſo ſtrongly inculcated in our ſacred oracles. But there have been perſons of eminent piety, and great knowledge in the holy Scriptures, who have given them a milder conſtruction: ſuch as our learned Archbiſhop Tillotſon, and one of the primitive fathers, Origen, who cannot be ſuſpected of too haſty a temper in departing from the literal ſence, ſince he adhered too cloſely to it in that text which ſpeaks of ſome who have made themſelves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven.

And there is one paſſage in Luke 16, which ſeems to countenance the doctrine of equity by employing it as a principle of reaſoning, in the anſwer made by Abraham to the rich man, which term we commonly turn into a proper name, and call Dives: for Abraham does not alledge the former behaviour of Dives and Lazarus, but their former fortunes to account for the preſent difference between

them. The commentators in the Synopſis tell us, that "it will add to the torments of the "damned, to hear and conſider the former "means and advantages they have been under "for ſalvation, if they have deſcended from "godly parents, or have been members of the "Church of Chriſt:" therefore Abraham called him, Son, to encreaſe his vexation by putting him in mind of his godly lineage, and communion with the true Church. I dont know upon what authority they aſſign the office of a devil to the father of the faithful, making him forward to heighten the torments of the damned: his anſwer ſeems rather to beſpeak a ſentiment of mildneſs and compaſſion: the appellation of Son or Child, is an expreſſion of fondneſs: he can give little comfort, tis true, but what he can, he gives him, which tends only to teach him patience by reflecting on the equitableneſs of his treatment. As if he had ſaid, Be content, my child, you have no hardſhip done you: remember that Providence caſt you into a ſtate of enjoyment in the other world, and Lazarus into wretchedneſs; it is but reaſon the tables ſhould now be turned, that you ſhould be the unhappy man, and he comforted. And leſt he ſhould be mortified at thinking himſelf utterly abandoned and neglected by the bleſſed Spirits, the patriarch takes care to

let him know this was not the caſe, and that it was not for want of Will, but of Power, that he did not haſten to endeavour ſome relief for him: for beſides all this there is a great chaſm, or vacuity between us and you, neither ground to walk upon, water to ſwim, nor air to fly along, ſo there is no poſſibility of paſſage from one to the other.

From hence we may gather that the glorified Saints, who do the Will of God as it is done in heaven, not as it is done upon earth, that is invariably and knowingly, ſtill have a tender regard for their unhappy brethren lying under the divine vengeance. And ſince they enjoy the beatific viſion, we may take their ſentiments for true copies of the glorious original they contemplate: from whence may be inferred that God himſelf bears the like tender regard; nor can we doubt whether any to whom he bears ſuch regard, ſhall ever fail of receiving the good effects of it in due time, as ſoon as the neceſſary ſervices of the univerſe, to be worked out by their ſufferings, ſhall be compleated.

Obſerve moreover, that the anſwer to Dives being framed upon this principle, there was room for him to draw a further conſolation from it than was expreſſed: for the change of conditions between him and Lazarus being put upon the footing of equity, without any notice taken of reward and puniſhment,

ſufferings were ſo intenſe as to caſt the balance much lower in his disfavour, than it had ever been raiſed to his advantage before, he might augurate that the ſame equity would require there ſhould be an amends kept in ſtore for him, ſufficient to bring the balance exactly even between both: for it could hardly conſiſt with equity that, becauſe one had lived in pleaſure and the other in wretchedneſs forty or fifty years, therefore the latter muſt be comforted and the former tormented to all eternity. Nor would the unnavigable gulph utterly exclude his hopes, for though declared impaſſable in width, nothing was ſaid to ſhow it immeaſurable in length: ſo he might think it not impoſſible that, by a long journey round the coaſt, he might arrive at the end of it, where he ſhould find the region of darkneſs joining with that of light.

I know very well that texts are beſt interpreted by conſtruing everything with a reference to the principal deſign for which they were delivered, but that deſign in the parable before us, can ſcarce be thought having anything to do with equality; it is generally holden to look no further than the perſuading ſuch as poſſeſs the good things of this world, to make ſuch prudent application of them as may improve their intereſts in futurity. Yet nothing

nothing is more common than to draw ſeparate inferences from particular expreſſions, which have no relation to the main tenour of the context: the Synopſis writers have done it copiouſly upon this very parable. And there is the better reaſon for building upon occaſional hints in the preſent caſe, becauſe it is not a ſubject proper to be entered upon profeſſedly in a goſpel preached to the poor, nor fit to be ranked among thoſe things which are written in ſuch legible characters, as that he who runs may read: therefore no more could be expected than a ſlender hint, or by-intimation, for this is enough to the conſiderate who have ears to hear, and more might have been miſchievous to the inconſiderate. Beſides, thoſe who believe every part of the goſpels dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, with a view to the inſtruction of future ages, as well as of the firſt diſciples, may the more eaſily admit, there might be ſomething in this parable not convenient to be too ſtrongly inſiſted upon, becauſe of its being omitted by the other three evangeliſts.

14. And I am ſo ſenſible of the inexpediency there may be in deſcanting upon theſe topics of equality and compenſation among the generality, that I ſhould gladly have ſuppreſſed them, if the courſe of my argument would have permitted me. For I am of a

more timid conſtitution than Tillotſon, nor, had I been authorized to ſpeak from the pulpit, ſhould have ventured ſo far there as he has gone; yet we do not find his diſcourſe has done miſchief in the world, or ſapped any part in the foundations of Religion. I have remarked before in § 10 of the Viſion, that the ancients had an advantage over us moderns, for dealing out their tenets in parcels by lectures to different companies, they could adapt their diſcourſes to their audience, whereas we, who have none other way of communicating our thoughts than by the preſs, are forced to pour out all promiſcuouſly before all comers. So can do no more than I have already done in the introductory ſection of this Chapter, by cautioning the too curious traveller to take that care of himſelf, which it is not in my power to take for him, and to leave me during my excurſions, waiting until he ſees me come down again to the old channels running along within his accuſtomed purlieus. Or ſhould he deſpiſe this warning as believing it uſeleſs to himſelf, ſtill it is my comfort to think that I am not in a ſituation to prove dangerous anywhere: the thinking, who can judge for themſelves, will be led by nobody, ſo I cannot miſlead them; and the populace, whenever miſled, are drawn by a great name and authority, which I neither expect,

expect, nor pretend to, nor desire; so they can never be hurt by an obscure man, who has neither title, nor dignity, nor a seat in the House, nor yet those spiritual gifts which make the possessor powerful in utterance, able to draw followers by thousands, to all the several skirts around this great Metropolis.

But though not bounden to such strict guard upon my steps as the eminent and the popular, neither have I thrown out things wantonly and thoughtlessly, nor unless compelled thereto by the necessity of attaining my principal aim: which was effectually to recommend universal Charity, that sum of natural Religion, and grand cardinal virtue, whereon are declared to hang all the law and the prophets. For without an equality I could find no certain means for coming at the mutual connection of interests between all perceptive creatures throughout the universe, intended for the subject of the next ensuing Chapter: because if there be any doomed to miseries absolutely eternal, there can be no participation of interests between them and other creatures. But such connection seemed to me the only medium discernible by the light of nature wherewith Charity might be established on its surest bottom, Self-interest, by showing that it is rather a measure

meaſure of higheſt prudence, than an obligation of duty. And none other ways have occurred to me, by which an equality may be effected, beſides thoſe ſuggeſted above. So that the valuableneſs of my principal aim may attone for running ſome little hazard of giving offence in the manner of purſuing it.

I ſhall add further that my concern lies only with the point of equality: nor have I a fondneſs for the theory of compenſation any longer than while it appears a neceſſary avenue to that. If another method can be found by which an equality may be made out, or if it ſhall be ranked among thoſe myſteries which we muſt admit tho' we cannot explain them, it will ſerve my purpoſe as well.

But the arguments evincing an equality, as ſet out in § 2. 3. appear to me irrefragable, and whoever would controvert them, ought to prove, either that the virtues we poſſeſs are entirely our own, not derived from God by the channel of his grace, nor a diſpenſation of his ordinary Providence in our favour, or elſe that he is partial, creating ſome to everlaſting bliſs, and others to everlaſting miſery. Therefore until one of thoſe two points be clearly made out, I may look upon the doctrine of equality as ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, and take it for the foundation of what I have next to offer.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

GENERAL GOOD.

IT has been frequently ſaid, that if horſes knew their own ſtrength, they would never ſubmit to all the drudgeries and hardſhips they are made to undergo. But it might with better juſtice be ſaid, that if men knew the force of that reaſon and diſcretion in their power to exert, they would never ſubmit to all thoſe inconveniencies, troubles and vexations, they might relieve themſelves from by a proper application of theſe talents. For there is induſtry and contrivance enough in quantity throughout the world, to ſupply all our wants and deſires; they fail only through miſapplication. We ſee daily how indefatigable men are in their ſeveral purſuits, how vigilant in watching opportunities to gratify a predominant paſſion, how attentive and ſagacious in practiſing little artifices to compaſs a favorite purpoſe. But the misfortune is, that they ſpend their induſtry for the moſt part upon trifles, or in the ſervice of ſome fond humour ſuggeſted accidentally by fancy, or at beſt for the accompliſhment of narrow views, terminating ſolely upon themſelves.

Whereas

Whereas the moſt beneficial enterprizes can only be atchieved by the united endeavours of many, concurring in ſome work that may redound to the advantage of them all. We ſee this exemplified in the benefits of ſociety, where the operations of war, the conveniencies of commerce, and regulations of civil policy, are promoted by the perſons concerned acting in partnerſhip and concert. The common tranſactions of life go on more eaſily, and converſation becomes more agreable, for a readineſs to aſſiſt and oblige.

Nature deſigned the whole ſpecies for one ſociety, as we may judge from the variety of productions ſerviceable to all, the different materials and opportunities for cultivating the arts and ſciences, which ſhe has diſtributed about among the countries upon earth: ſo that no one of them furniſhes the accommodations of life compleatly without communication with the reſt. But folly, ſelfiſhneſs and paſſion, have prevented our growing into a vigorous healthy body; we are a disjointed multitude, each caring only for himſelf, and thereby loſing thoſe innumerable advantages we might work out by our unanimity. Whoſe place is ill ſupplied by ſuccedaneums, ſuch as the deſire of riches or honour, the laſh of neceſſity or dread of dangers too glaring to eſcape our dull optics: which prove a feeble cement

ment to join us into thoſe partial ſocieties and temporary engagements conveying the bleſſings we do enjoy. Nay what is worſe, our greedineſs and ill humour often drive us to endeavour the damage and diſpleaſure of one another: which occaſions a double waſte of induſtry, by obliging others, who might employ it better, to apply theirs in relieving or defending themſelves againſt our attacks. But unanimity cannot ſubſiſt without univerſal charity and unreſerved goodwill, which nothing can better promote than the perſuaſion of there being a real connection of intereſts and mutual dependence of happineſs among mankind: and this perſuaſion our doctrine of equality ſeems particularly well ſuited to propagate.

2. It was with a view to bring men better diſpoſed towards one another that I entred upon my taſk. For how much ſoever I may have ſeemed to trifle and play the wanton ſometimes, I have all along had grand deſigns in my eye, being no leſs than to contribute, ſo far as in me lay, towards exciting a general concern and mutual benevolence among my fellow creatures. For I cannot help being perſuaded that if this could be compleatly effected, ſo as that every man ſhould become a friend and hearty well-wiſher to every man, this alone would reſtore a paradiſe upon earth; although earth-

earthquakes ſhould ſtill continue to overthrow, tempeſts to ſweep away, blights to deſtroy, and wild beaſts to devour, as uſual: for I doubt not that the united ſkill and labours of mankind might remove all intolerable evils, and teach the art of bearing eaſily all that could not be avoided. Yet I am not ſo romantic as to think of compleating this deſign, or even making any large ſtride towards it. But Rome was not built in a day, nor by the hands of a ſingle labourer: yet years and ages are compoſed of days, and the moſt ſtupendous works performed by numbers made up of ſingle labourers.

The world ſeems growing more humanized, more enlarged in their notions, and readier to take concern in diſtant joys and ſorrows, than they were in former times: and as theſe advances are made inſenſibly by particular perſons, each contributing a little towards promoting them, it becomes every one to lend a helping hand to ſo ſalutary a work, in ſuch way as he finds himſelf beſt ſuited to take. As I have not much intercourſe among mankind, nor acquired an expertneſs in the management of topics prevailing with the Many: it ſeemed that I could not do better than addreſs myſelf to the thinking and ſtudious, by collecting a chain of obſervations which might ſerve as a hint for them to improve, towards bringing

bringing themſelves into a conformity of ſentiment and openeſs of temper. For if, inſtead of entring the liſts as adverſaries contending for victory, they would conſider one another as perſons conſulting together upon the methods of accompliſhing a purpoſe they all had at heart: however they might vary for a while, they could not be long without diſcerning which were the beſt. And if they would employ their talents ſincerely for the public good, in preference to any private views or favourite ſchemes or precontracted prejudices, they muſt quickly draw the reſt of the world after them. For the multitude are ready enough to follow their leaders; nor ever deſert them, unleſs enticed away by oppoſite leaders.

But to deal with the ſagacious and deep-thinking one muſt go to the bottom of things, for they will not take up with ſtrong aſſertions nor ſuperficial appearances, how ſhining ſoever: but to bring them into one mind one muſt proceed upon premiſſes they can examine themſelves and approve of. Therefore they fail in their tranſactions among one another by dealing too much in abſtractions, ideal differences of right and wrong, of laudable and blamable, and intrinſic value of rules and qualities: which as men's ideas vary infinitely, being modelled according

cording to their ſeveral turns of thought, they can never ſettle to mutual ſatisfaction. For this reaſon I have endeavoured to dig down to a foundation they will all agree ſtrong enough to bear a ſuperſtructure: for I ſuppoſe the moſt righteous and unprejudiced will allow it commendable for a man to do what he can for himſelf, provided he do no hurt to another thereby, nor thwart any rule of Religion or duty. Therefore ſelf-intereſt of itſelf is a proper conſideration to put us upon action: and I have taken this for my baſis to work upon. It muſt be owned indeed that all others propoſe happineſs and trueſt intereſt, as the ultimate aim to be attained by their ſeveral ſyſtems: but then they either carry their road through the wilds of abſtraction, or take large leaps from ſtage to ſtage, by which methods they do not render the continuity viſible even to one another. Therefore I have been carefull to keep my feet all along upon the ſolid ground of experience, employing ſuch abſtractions and reaſonings from time to time as could be drawn thereupon, and attempting to trace the connection ſtep by ſtep from ſelf-intereſt to the virtues: ſo that whoever thinks fit to follow me may do it without leaping hedges or flying in the air, and judge for himſelf in what particulars I have been defective.

Only

Only I muſt deſire he will diſtinguiſh between excurſions I make for illuſtration or for removing obſtructions that would ſtop my paſſage or for other particular purpoſes, and the main parts of my road conducting directly towards the journey's end.

I have examined human nature and found that Satisfaction, every man's own ſatisfaction, is the ſpring that actuates all his motions. I have inveſtigated the ſources of ſatisfaction, which is conveyed for the moſt part through the channel of deſire; obſerved that deſire may be turned into new courſes by good management; enquired what turns of deſire afford the moſt copious ſtream; and ſhown that the ideas exciting deſire derive, nearly or remotely, from external and prior cauſes. I have then proceeded to the contemplation of external nature; and from thence attempted to riſe to the Author of nature, together with ſo much as can be diſcovered from his works concerning his attributes and character: wherein there appears no weakneſs nor humour, no ſpark of arbitrary or inequitable diſpoſition, but unreſerved and unnigardly goodneſs. From this height I have returned downwards, to ſhow that all cauſes in act derive their efficacy and deſtination from the act of the Firſt, exerted with certain foreknowledge and deliberate

deſign of whatever ſhould follow thereupon. I have likewiſe ſcrutinized minutely the motions of freewill, explained the difference between neceſſity and certainty, and ſhown the conſiſtence of liberty with pre-appointment; whereby it appears that human action, is among the cauſes depending in a chain upon the Firſt. From all this I have concluded that all events, whether yielding enjoyment or trouble, effected as well by the choice and activity of man as by chance or nature, were of the divine proviſion: and this proviſion being made in perfect equity, that there is an equality of happineſs, upon the whole balance of good and evil, allotted to every creature.

Thus far we have travelled already, and our next ſtep ſhall be, from this equality to deduce a reciprocal connection of intereſts among the creation: from whence will naturally flow a univerſal charity and ſteddy attention to the general good. As to the methods whereby this is moſt effectually promoted, theſe are copious enough to ſupply materials for another work, if we ſhould have ſtrength and opportunity to undertake it: it is enough that we furniſh ourſelves here with a fundamental and ruling principle of action, in lieu of that we had eſtabliſhed before. For we ſet out at firſt with the poſition, that

a man

a man has nothing elſe to do than purſue his own intereſts in ſuch way as his judgement ſhall repreſent moſt feaſible and effectual: nor need we ſtill recant our opinion, but having found our own intereſt indiſſolubly connected with that of others, we may diſcard our old aim ſecurely, and take up this, as anſwering the very purpoſe driven at by the former; keeping our eye conſtantly upon it as a mark to direct us in all our proceedings.

3. For if the accounts of all are to be ſet even, we can get nothing by obtaining a little advantage at the expence of greater damage to another; and loſe nothing by ſubmitting to ſome pain for procuring him a greater pleaſure. Becauſe in the former caſe we depreſs his balance more than we raiſe our own, and thereby cut ourſelves off from ſo much of the expectations we were entitled to by the rule of equality as the difference amounts to: in the latter we raiſe his balance more than we depreſs our own, and thereby encreaſe our future expectations in like proportion. For ſo if there be two merchants in partnerſhip, each of them during the courſe of trade, would think himſelf intereſted in the balance appearing from time to time upon the others books: and would judge it prudent to throw any branch of trade [illegible] hands, if

it

it would turn to greater profit there than in his own. Nor would it alter his meaſures, that his partner had a larger balance of caſh in hand already; for while he could ſupply himſelf by his own induſtry, he would chooſe to do it that way rather than draw out of what lay elſewhere in reſerve for his future occaſions.

Now tis the rule of equality, entituling each adventurer to a ſhare in the whole profits of the buſineſs, that conſtitutes a partnerſhip; whether impoſed by the authority of a ſuperior or ſettled by mutual compact. For if a merchant ſends his ſons with a competent ſtock to trade in different parts of the globe, upon condition that when they return home, the gains of all ſhall be divided equally among them; this is a partnerſhip as much as if they had entred into it by voluntary agreement: and the King's frigates, ordered out upon a joint cruize, are as much partners as a company of privateers.

Therefore the univerſe may be juſtly regarded as an innumerable hoſt of partners, dealing together in the traffic of happineſs: and it is our buſineſs to apply all our contrivance and induſtry towards improving the common ſtock, and adding to the quantity of enjoyments in nature wherever we can. 'Tis no matter whether we do this in the hands of another

another or of ourſelves, we ſhall advance our own benefit either way alike; becauſe our ſhare or intereſt muſt always riſe and fall proportionably with that of the public. But there are diſburſements to be made in all traffic: labour, trouble, danger, diſappointment, ſelf-denial, pain and puniſhment, are the diſburſements neceſſary in the commerce of nature: and the prudent merchant will grudge no expence likely to yield a larger return. Only he will manage parſimoniouſly, driving his bargains hard, that the coſt may not run higher than the occaſion abſolutely requires: nor yet will he ſcruple to advance any ſums becauſe the returns may fall into other hands, for the common ſtock will be the object he has conſtantly at heart, as knowing himſelf ſo much the richer man as that can be made to encreaſe.

4. Thus the general good becomes the root whereout all our ſchemes and contrivances, all our rules of conduct and ſentiments of honour are to branch: and the centre whereto all our particular lines of direction are to point. But this general good, although much in men's mouths, ſeems but little underſtood, being ſuppoſed always to imply ſomething redounding to the benefit of the whole community: whereas we are too inconſiderable to do any good whereof the univerſe may partake. Ne-

vertheleſs let it be remembred that the whole is made up of individuals; ſo that every pleaſure we do our neighbour, is an addition to the quantity of happineſs in nature. Juſt as a merchant, ſending goods to one partner, which may be diſpoſed of to great advantage, thereby enlarges the common ſtock although the reſt of the company ſhould know nothing of the matter. Therefore whatever good we do to any particular creature, we do to the univerſe: agreably to that expreſſion of him who repreſented a community as their head, What ye have done unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done unto me.

But though univerſal good be promoted by the good of any ſingle perſon, yet it is more promoted by what redounds to the benefit of numbers; which therefore deſerves the preference whenever opportunity ſerves or the two come into competition: and this is ſo evident that nobody can doubt of it. Hence the mighty buſtle commonly made with public ſpirit, which as bandied about in the world is become an empty ſound with nothing of ſpirit in it; or uſed as a pretence to varniſh over ſelfiſh deſigns; or employed as an artifice to bring others into a diſintereſted zeal, which thoſe who recommend it laugh at in their ſleeve as a weakneſs. But if ſuch as have [illegible]ilities would ſet themſelves in earneſt to trace

trace the relation between ſelf-intereſt and general through the channels of nature and Providence, in the manner I have attempted, they might perhaps clear the paſſage more demonſtratively; and by their greater ſagacity and ſkill in caſting light upon objects, might render the connection viſible to common apprehenſions, ſo as to make them intimately perſuaded of its reality, and embrace it as a practical principle of action. Nevertheleſs, to take off from their trouble as much as I can, ſince men are remarkably ingenious at ſtarting objections againſt the beſt evidenced truths they do not like, I ſhall endeavour to obviate ſuch as I apprehend may ariſe againſt this rule now laid down as the moſt prudential.

5. It may be alledged that the quantity of good and evil in nature is ſuch and none other than God in his wiſdom and bounty has thought proper to make it: and conſequently the portion of each individual muſt be ſuch preciſely as falls to his ſhare, according to the number of creatures exiſtent, beyond the power of anything to alter it. Therefore it matters not what good or hurt they bring upon their neighbour, becauſe they cannot diminiſh the portion of either alloted to him, they can only anticipate the times of his receiving it: for if they do the former, he has ſo much leſs

to expect; if the latter, ſo much leſs to fear, in the remainder of his period.

Now this allegation might have ſome colour of reaſon, if we knew the preciſe portion aſſigned to each creature, or if it were to be aſcertained by an unalterable fatality: but we know not the one, and know the other, from our experience, not to be the caſe. So that whenever we do good, we ſee the immediate benefit of it; but we cannot ſee, nor rationally conclude, that ſome remote loſs or damage ſhall enſue from it. And with reſpect to the portion, the whole meaſure of that is ſecured no otherwiſe than the ſeveral articles compoſing it, and the times of their being given; that is, not by a fatality, but by a proviſion of adequate cauſes. Let but men turn the tables, and they will ſee the hollowneſs of their excuſe: for if another goes to hurt them or debar them from taking the pleaſures in their power, they will not bear to be told, it is only an anticipation or retardment of what they muſt receive ſome time or other. And in gratifications of deſire or ſelf-intereſt, they will not hear of a fatality: whereas in reality theſe matters are as much under appointment by the proviſion of cauſes as anything elſe whatever. Therefore let them only raiſe their deſire to its proper object, to wit, the advancement of good wherever

wherever feaſible, and their objection will vaniſh of itſelf. I have endeavoured to make appear in the laſt Chapter but one, that the ſecret Will of God can be no guide to our conduct, which we are to form upon the declared Will, evidenced to us by our reaſon judging upon the conſequences of meaſures, or by rules built upon our former experience or upon the authority of thoſe who know the tendency of actions better than ourſelves: therefore we have nothing to do with appointments any further than as manifeſted to our apprehenſion. For the decree or determination of God is nothing elſe than the proviſion of cauſes adapted to each particular event; and the operation of thoſe cauſes is requiſite to execute the decree: but in matters within our power, our own deliberation and induſtry are among thoſe cauſes; wherefore we muſt think and ſtrive for ourſelves notwithſtanding the decree.

'This is apparent in common affairs of life: for who that lives in plenty does not ſee that he has his daily bread appointed him by having the means in his hands of procuring it, for which he ought to be thankfull? yet does not ſee at the ſame time that this appointment by no means ſuperſedes his cares in ſending to market and ordering his family? Thus although the portion of

happineſs

happineſs be of divine appointment, yet the application of our cares and induſtry, for conveying the parts of it adminiſtred by our own agency, is requiſite and adviſable. In theſe inſtances the Will of God is done by our Will: but that Will orders all things for the beſt. Yet though whatever we ſhall do muſt therefore be agreable to his Will, and beſt to be done, becauſe done: ſtill this does not take away the uſe of judgement and deliberation to direct our choice between the ſeveral meaſures of conduct. If a man having it in his power to do ſomething whereby he ſhould get a thouſand pounds ſeven years hence, ſhould be told that whether he did it or let it alone, either way would be the beſt he could take: I make no doubt he would prefer that which afforded him a viſible gain, rather than depend upon the unknown profit to ariſe from his rejecting it. So if, however we conduct ourſelves, we ſhall unerringly purſue that unknown Beſt appointed by divine proviſion, it behoves us take the way apparently beſt to our own judgement.

But men never employ theſe ſophiſms unleſs in juſtification of their gratifying ſome preſent fancy; whereas if they had any weight, they muſt avail againſt inclination as well as judgement, the omiſſion of either being alike the beſt thing could have been done,

done, whenever done: ſo that all choice and preference of any kind whatever will be taken away, and a total ſtagnation of activity enſue. But if between things equal in themſelves, liking and fancy may caſt the balance, ſurely the weights of reaſon and prudence are greater. Yet we cannot allow them intrinſecally equal, for our fortunes in futurity, as well as preſent time, are in great meaſure of our own making: therefore if we hurt them by miſconduct, what remains will be the quantity thought beſt to be allotted us by divine wiſdom; and if we improve them, the quantity ſo encreaſed will likewiſe be that thought beſt by the ſame wiſdom. Thus the Beſt we may attain by the road of virtue and diſcretion, will be (if I may ſo ſpeak) a better Beſt, than any we can arrive at thro' the paths of folly and indulgence.

6. Another handle may be taken for cavilling, from our having laid down that every evil is to be conſidered as the payment for a purchace of ſomething more valuable: from whence it may be inferred that by plaguing and hurting another, we do him no injury, for we only compell him thereby to make an advantageous purchace. Or if the value of the eſtate and the price be ſettled by divine appointment, we only call upon him for a part of his payment, which it is all one whether he make to day or to morrow, ſince he muſt have made it ſome time or other.

But

But this may be anſwered in the ſame manner with the former; for we know not either the certain value of the eſtate or the price, nor whether one ſhall be enhanced in proportion to the other: therefore by doing hurt we viſibly encreaſe the payment, without knowing whether we ſhall encreaſe the purchace.

Beſides, by this rule it would be incumbent upon every man to make himſelf as miſerable as poſſible, becauſe by ſo doing he would purchaſe a larger fund of happineſs: but I believe no man in his ſober ſenſes and diſpaſſionate moods, ever run himſelf willfully into miſeries upon this account; nor unleſs called thereto by ſome rule of duty, which was a particular aſſurance that the ſufferings he ſubmitted to were worth his while to undergo. We know not what proportion of evil is neceſſary for the ſervices of the univerſe, therefore ought to uſe all means in our power for leſſening it, being well aſſured that we cannot reduce it lower than the ſum impoſed for the neceſſary ſervices. The public taxes are a payment for the protection afforded by the ſtate: yet he that ſhould compell his neighbour to pay a ſhilling in the pound more than the law demands, or than he knows the exigencies of the ſtate require, would be deemed to do an injury. So he who puts

puts another to a pain or trouble from whence he ſees not the benefit reſulting, does him a wrong; by exacting a payment he cannot be aſſured would ever have been demanded.

7. But the moſt plauſible exception lying againſt the expedience of labouring for the general good, ariſes from our inability to contribute ſo much towards it as to make our ſhare worth the conſideration. For it may be urged, if you had it in your power to do ſomething that would make a thouſand people happy for fifty years together: though this would ſeem a vaſt addition to the common ſtock of enjoyment, yet when you reflect what prodigious multitudes it is to be divided amongſt, your own part will ſcarce amount to the value of once ſmelling at a roſe. So there is no inducement to beſtir yourſelf, becauſe with your utmoſt endeavours you cannot make an addition to your own fortune ſufficient to be perceived.

But let us conſider, that if this doctrine were to prevail, moſt of the bleſſings of nature, the benefits of ſociety and conveniences of life, would be loſt: the moſt valuable of which are procured by the operation of feeble inconſiderable agents. The Planets are holden in their orbits by the attraction of minute particles, undiſcernible with a microſcope, compoſing the body of the Sun: the earth is cloathed

cloathed with paſture by little ſeeds, each whereof cannot throw up herbage enough to make a bite for a ſheep: if we admit a Mundane Soul, the worlds are formed and the courſes of nature kept in order, by ſpirits which ſingly could not heave a mote in the Sun beams. What is a ſingle ſoldier in thoſe armies that have kept the mightieſt potentates in awe? If he lag behind you do not ſtop for him, or if he be ſlain you do not miſs him. What is a private perſon's quota to thoſe immenſe ſupplies ſupporting our armaments in all quarters of the globe? If he has not wherewithal to pay, the operations go on as before, and none but the collector or his neareſt neighbours know anything of his failure. Yet a wiſeman, finding himſelf to have courage and ability for the ſervice, would not deſert in time of battle although there were no courts martial to overawe him: nor withold his proportion of the taxes although his goods were liable to no diſtreſs. For he would regard what he contributes by his perſon or his pocket as entitling him to a ſhare of the advantages procured by all the others he joins with: an object well worth his contemplation. Nor let it be made a diſcouragement that ſome unreaſonable creatures refuſe their helping hand: for there are enow concurring ſome way or other in the public ſervice

ſervice to render the benefits worked out by them a ſufficient inducement to become one of their number.

8. But we need not undervalue our particular ſervices becauſe they yield but little profit: for though the performance of them cannot do much good, yet it may prevent great miſchiefs which might have enſued upon the omiſſion. The negligence of a ſingle ſentinel may give the enemy an opportunity of ſurprizing a whole camp: and a little careleſſneſs in placing a candle may produce a fire that ſhall burn down a whole town. Therefore we can never be too vigilant, becauſe we can never know what waſte or deſtruction may enſue upon the want of it. What though our perſons be ſingle and our efforts ſmall, nobody can ſay what multitudes they may not affect, nor what tides of induſtry they may not excite. 'Tis notorious of how ſpreading a nature both the virtues and the vices are: for example and ſympathy diffuſe the ſtream to all quarters from a ſingle fountain: and a man may ſometimes find that in his power wherein all mankind ſhall have concern in the conſequences. Noah built his ark to ſave his little family conſiſting of eight perſons: but in ſo doing he ſaved all the gen- -en that have ſince overſpread unders of Religions and ſects in

in philoſophy, inventors of arts and ſciences, though imparting their thoughts to a few, have thereby opened channels which overflowed whole nations and countries. And as we know not how far the people of the intermediate ſtate ſtand affected by what paſſes here, nor what effect their tranſactions have upon the ſpiritual ſubſtance; it is not impoſſible nor improbable, that a ſingle perſon may do that which ſhall be felt by the whole univerſe.

It may be ſaid this might happen perhaps to extraordinary perſons once in an age, but a private man never ſtands in a ſituation to work conſequences that can poſſibly extend beyond the narrow circle of his acquaintance. But I would aſk him how he knows that? For we have ſhown in our Chapter on Providence, that the affairs of the world are all complicated and interwoven among one another into one tiſſue: that the greateſt events depend upon the minuteſt, and the conſtitution of the Roman empire, together with that of the kingdoms branched out from thence, might be determined by ſome ſuch inconſiderable circumſtance as the wearing a particular coloured ribbon upon a certain feſtival. So that there is no ſuch thing as triſle in nature, every little incident and ſudden fancy being provided for by perfect wiſdom with

a regard to the whole. For how narrow ſoever the views of creatures may be, God beholds the univerſe, and directs every little ſtroke in his all-comprehenſive plan, ſo as to contribute its ſhare towards the general good. Or if there be ſuch things as trifles, they are ſo intermingled among the imperceptible ſprings of important events, that the moſt prying eye cannot diſtinguiſh them apart.

Therefore we ought always to ſtand upon our guard and ſhape our minute motions by ſuch diſcretion and regard to rectitude as is proper upon the occaſion, for the chance of effecting what unſeen good or eſcaping what unthought of evil may poſſibly depend upon them. For the chain of cauſes and effects runs to ſuch immeaſurable lengths and divides into ſo many unperceivable threads, that no man can be ſure his manner of ſtirring the fire or buttoning his coat, ſhall not be attended with conſequences greater than he is aware of. But it would be in vain to take his meaſures upon conſequences that human ſagacity cannot inveſtigate: therefore he has nothing to do with them, nor with anything elſe beſides the rules of prudence, charity, propriety and innocence, ſo far as in the preſent circumſtances of the caſe he can diſcern them. For ſince the

wiſeſt men have always maintained that moral good is the ready road to natural, while he follows the beſt lights of his judgement, he may truſt Providence for leading him unknowingly into all thoſe ſecret advantages poſſible in his ſituation to be attained. For though God no doubt has appointed each of us his certain portion, yet he deals out to us, perhaps the whole or at leaſt a great part of it, by our own or one another's hands. For we have ſeen more than once before, that things certain may nevertheleſs depend upon human contrivance and induſtry. Therefore it behoves us to uſe the proper degree of circumſpection as well in matters of trifle as of moment: becauſe according to our conduct in either, our portion will be better or worſe; and that in a meaſure greater than we think of, and large enough to deſerve our notice and overpay the trouble of the acquiſition.

9. Yet even ſuppoſing this was not the caſe, but that it were impoſſible for us, either directly or in conſequence, to add ſo largely to the general fund as may raiſe the leaſt perceivable difference in each private ſhare; ſtill there would not want encouragement to beſtir ourſelves: for it is not neceſſary that every particular profit muſt be divided among the whole company, becauſe the

the members may have equal ſhares though aſſigned them out of different funds. Were there a million of traders diſperſed up and down in different quarters and deſtined to make the ſame fortunes, they might be divided into diſtinct partnerſhips of ten in a company; who might traffic and ſettle their balances from time to time among themſelves, without intercourſe among the other decads. Equality might ſtill be preſerved, provided there were an able ſuperintendant of the whole, who ſhould take care there were the like opportunities of trade among the ſeveral decads, or that particular perſons were removed in due order from a leſs to a more gainfull fellowſhip. And in fact we find the creation, ſo far as our experience reaches, divided into diſtinct ſpecies and limited ſocieties; the effects of whoſe actions extend no further than to a certain number of thoſe with whom they have intercourſe. Nor can we preſume otherwiſe of thoſe unſeen conſequences depending upon the ſecret concatenation of cauſes, which however they may in part extend to innumerable multitudes, are likely to affect ſome particular claſs of Beings principally, with whom we ſtand neareſt concerned. And upon removal into a new fellowſhip, the rule of equality will require that the place aſſigned us ſhould

be ſuch as may ſecure to us the balance due upon our former account. For though theſe changes be brought about by natural cauſes, yet God, being the Author and diſpoſer of nature, eſtabliſhes all her proviſions in equity; as well thoſe reſpecting the changes from one ſtate into another, as thoſe regulating accounts in the ſame. So that by our diligence in the branch of trade before us, we determine what intereſt we ſhall have in the branches to be allotted us hereafter. Thus in every ſtage of Being, the main of what profits we can make will accrue to the benefit of ſuch a competent number as that our proportion ſhall remain weighty enough to be felt in our hands.

Or even if we ſuppoſe all the gains accruing thrown into the general fund upon account of the whole partnerſhip, there is no neceſſity they ſhould be drawn out again by little fractions from each, ſo minute as to reduce them below our notice. Could a man raiſe a profit of a thouſand pounds to receive it again by a farthing a year, he might deſpiſe the addition of a farthing to his annual income: but if it came by fifties or hundreds of pounds at a time, he would find the convenience of them for his occaſions. So the ſhare of happineſs we earn by ſome effort of our induſtry, being dealt out to us in ſerviceable

portions,

portions, will anſwer our future wants ſome time or other, without detriment to our fellow creatures receiving theirs in like manner. This would evidently be the caſe upon admitting a univerſal rotation: for then every perſon falling in ſome part of his courſe into the place of every other, muſt receive the very ſame good, both in kind and quantity, as he does to his neighbour; and if he can do that which redounds to many, he will reap the benefit of it ſo many times as there are perſons to whom he has done ſervice. But ſhould there be no ſuch exact retaliation in kind, yet equity requiring that the good befalling one ſhould likewiſe befall another, there muſt be a compenſation equal in value. Therefore though we do not receive juſt the ſame ſized notes or the ſame ſpecies of coin we carried in; we ſhall be ſure of receiving the full amount in good negotiable caſh.

So that ſince the allegory of books has been employed by the beſt authorities, we may conſider the proviſions of heaven as a univerſal Bank, wherein accounts are regularly kept, and every man debited or credited for the leaſt farthing he takes out or brings in. All the good we procure to another, the labour and ſelf-denial we go through prudently, and evil we ſuffer unavoidably, are written down

as articles in our favour; all the evil we do, the fond indulgencies we give into, or good we receive, entered per Contra as ſo much drawn out of our caſh. Perhaps ſomething may be taken out for the public ſervices, but then we have the benefit of this in the public conveniences and protection whereof we partake: but the remainder lies placed to each private account for anſwering our calls or ſupplying our occaſions.

And this is a better Bank than that of England to keep our current caſh; I ſhall not ſay, for its greater ſecurity, becauſe the monied men of this and foreign nations think the other ſecure enough: but the Bank of England give no intereſt upon their notes, whereas the Bank of the Univerſe improve what we have lying there to immenſe advantage, far beyond what could be made in Script by any Jew or clerk in the ſecretary office let into ſecrets; and the application to our ſeveral occaſions lies under wiſer management than our own. If I have an account with the Bank of England and ſhould take it into my head, becauſe other folks are fond of the like, to throw away a large ſum in punch and ale for gaining me the huzzas of a drunken mob and procuring me an opportunity of ſerving my country which I want abilities to uſe; or to buy a horſe of noble lineage deſcended from

from Turkiſh or Barbarian anceſtors to run at Newmarket: upon applying to the caſhier in Thread-needle ſtreet for a thouſand pounds, he will inſtantly order payment without aſking queſtions: though I may want the money grievouſly next year to make up a portion for my Serena or my Sparkler. Or ſhould I chance on ſome diſtant journey to be reduced low in pocket, if I have no check'd paper along with me, I cannot draw for a ſingle ſixpence to buy me a little bread and cheeſe.

But the directors of the bank above have conſtant intelligence from all parts of the univerſe, and their runners traverſing to and fro among their cuſtomers: ſo that whatever I have belonging to me there, if I call for a ſum to ſquander away upon ſome vice or folly, though I beg and pray never ſo hard, the caſhier will not iſſue me a farthing, becauſe he knows it had better be kept in reſerve for more neceſſary occaſions. But if I chance to fall into diſtreſs in any diſconſolate ſpot of nature, where a ſupply would do me real ſervice: though I ſhould not ſee the danger of my ſituation, nor have ſent advice with the needful per poſt, I ſhall have the runner angel privately ſlip the proper ſum into my hand at a time when I leaſt expect it. So we have no need to trouble ourſelves about the improvement of our money there, or the laying it out for

our particular uſes: tis our buſineſs to uſe all our judgement and induſtry and vigilance for throwing as much as we can continually into bank. Yet this does not hinder us from taking preſent enjoyments from time to time, where innocent and lying properly within our reach: for tho' this be a leſſening of our future demands, yet the future were of no avail if it were never to be preſent; nor is money good for any thing but to be ſpent, provided it be ſpent prudently and no more given for things than they are worth.

10. Nor have we concern only with the articles of our own account, but with thoſe likewiſe of other perſons: from whence we may receive a pleaſure not to be found in the ordinary courſe of worldly commerce. If on attending at the earthly accountant office, the eye, while the clerks turn over the leaves of their books, happens to catch upon ſomebody elſe's balance which appears ten times larger than our own, one may be mortified to find oneſelf ſo inconſiderable in point of riches, compared with him.

But in the accounts of Providence a like diſcovery could prove no ſuch mortification: for we dealing all in partnerſhip, the profits whereof are to be made equal to each in ſome ſhape or other in ſome part of our period, whatever virtues, talents or ſucceſſes we ſee elſewhere

elſewhere, adding more largely to the common ſtock than we can do ourſelves, muſt become matter of rejoicing rather than vexation. Becauſe the rule of equality enſures to us that we ſhall either immediately partake of the fruits gathered therefrom, or at ſome future time be inſtated in a branch of trade we ſee to be more profitable than that now under our management.

And this conſideration duly attended to, muſt put an end to that humour of depreciating the characters, the abilities and the enjoyments of other creatures, ſo generally prevailing among mankind. For as the more good, ſo the leſs evil we can find in others the better it is for ourſelves. For my part I am ſo far from any temptation to believe myſelf the happieſt of my ſpecies, that I would thank anybody who ſhould prove me the moſt miſerable creature in the univerſe: I do not mean, who ſhould bring miſchief upon me or diſcover misfortunes in ſtore which I do not know of, for this would be madneſs to deſire; but ſhould ſhow the condition I now ſtand in, ſuch as it is, inferiour to that of every other Being: ſo that the common labourer, the galley ſlave, the negro, the flea, the mite and every departed ſoul, poſſeſſed greater enjoyments than thoſe within my reach. Such a diſcovery would afford me a moſt

a moſt raviſhing proſpect of nature, and without hurting me in preſent, give me more hopefull expectations for the future: for ſince I am not always to continue in the ſame ſtate, I could make no change unleſs for the better.

But I am too ſenſible of the bleſſings vouchſafed me, to be perſuaded into this imagination: on the contrary, when I behold miſeries anywhere appearing far greater than anything I ever underwent, which yet I have found troubleſome enough; it raiſes, beſides a fellow feeling for the ſufferer, a melancholy reflection to think that the lot of exiſtence is ſubjected to ſo ſevere a condition. However, my partiality to wiſh it eaſier makes me ready to embrace every evidence that offers for believing it ſo: and it is with pleaſure I find alleviations, from cuſtom, difference of apprehenſion or inſenſibility, for every natural evil; and extenuations, from ignorance, inadvertency and ſurprize, for every moral. Or if this cannot be done, find benefits reſulting therefrom; enjoyments and advantages compenſating them.

Thus the doctrine of equality tends directly to nouriſh benevolence, mutual eſteem, good wiſhes and favourable judgements, between fellow creatures: and how-much ſoever it may appear at firſt ſight to encourage

encourage indolence by making men truſt to the diligence of their partners, yet when fairly examined, it proves as ſtrong a recommendation and ſolid ground of care and induſtry in particular perſons, as any principle whatever. Therefore thoſe who ſhould not admit it, might yet allow it excuſe, for ſake of the deſirable ends aimed at by propoſing it to their conſideration.

CHAP. XXIX.

DIVINE JUSTICE.

THE attentive Reader will pleaſe to remember that at the cloſe of my Chapters upon the Attributes, I took notice of ſome others uſually placed upon the liſt, which I there called ſecondary Attributes, as not ariſing from contemplation of the divine nature regarded apart: whereof this of juſtice was one, which I could not take fully into conſideration until I had collected further materials neceſſary for the purpoſe. He will now ſee why I poſtponed this article, to wit, that I might firſt go through what obſervations I had to make upon the manner of God's governing his creatures, whereof the proper diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments is one of the engines employed.

We

proper for his creatures, than his own gracious bounty and the conſtitution of univerſal nature he eſtabliſhed from everlaſting. Therefore we have no reaſon to believe he ever terminates his views upon evil, or has nothing further in his thought, when he takes vengeance, than the ſufferings of the ſinner.

2. Were there an immediate and neceſſary connection between offence and puniſhment, there could be no place for mercy; much leſs could the exerciſe of it deſerve commendation, but muſt rather be deemed an erroneous and unnatural proceeding. Yet we find, that in the judgement of the wiſeſt, an aptneſs to ſhow mercy and to forgive or forget injuries, is always regarded as one of the brighteſt jewels in a man's character: which ſhows there is ſome medium making the connection, which when wanting in the circumſtances of the caſe, mercy may laudably interpoſe. And this medium can be none other than the neceſſity or expedience of puniſhing; in order to prevent the miſchiefs expectant upon future enormities. Therefore it is that repentance ſheaths the ſword of juſtice, which it could not do if demerit was eſſential to tranſgreſſion; becauſe nothing ſubſequent can alter the quality or eſſence of a deed already perpetrated: but the thorough amendment of the [illegible] preventing his ever offending again, renders

renders puniſhment needleſs, by anſwering the purpoſe intended thereby, and ſo removing the medium of neceſſity, deſtroys the connection. Therefore when puniſhment is neceſſary for example to others, repentance will not be accepted: becauſe there the medium conſiſting of many ſtrings, though one be cut aſunder, the reſt remain entire, to ſhut out the entrance of mercy.

Nor can we conceive the matter beholden otherwiſe by the all-ſeeing eye of God, with whom is mercy as well as judgement: but if in his original conſtitution of nature, he had eſtabliſhed an immediate and eſſential connection between offence and puniſhment, we cannot ſuppoſe he would ever have broken through his own conſtitutions. Yet Mercy has always been counted his favourite Attribute: and when in condeſcention to our weakneſs, he has been repreſented by figures taken from human ſentiments, we find him deſcribed as being uneaſy and anxious to have the ſinner eſcape. As I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that he ſhould turn from his evil ways and live. But neither God nor man can be ſuppoſed to ſubmit to a thing they have no pleaſure in, unleſs for ſome greater benefit to redound therefrom: and in ſuch caſe act upon a motive of neceſſity.

But

But neceſſity, when operating as a motive, always weighs by the idea of advantage, which the thing we do is neceſſary to attain, and which renders it more beneficial to be done than omitted. Therefore ſince God is no reſpecter of perſons, nor conſequently entertains a perſonal hatred or grudging againſt any one, but his mercy is over all his works and he would not that any ſhould periſh: we may rationally conclude, that whenever he executes vengeance, he does it not in wrath, but in wiſdom, as a means to work out ſome good that ſhall overbalance the ſufferings of the delinquent. For his mercy never ſleeps, but would always interpoſe whenever juſtice goes to lift the thunder, unleſs goodneſs and wiſdom did ſometimes withold her, by ſhowing the greater profit redounding from puniſhment. Which profit equity enters in her books of account, apportioning to the ſinner his ſhare of whatever is earned by his ſufferings. For God orders all things for the beſt, whereby muſt be meant, not the beſt for himſelf, becauſe he wants nothing from us, nor can his riches or happineſs receive addition by anything paſſing among us, but the beſt for his creatures: whoſe intereſts we have already ſeen are ſo involved together, that whatever promotes the general good of the univerſe or of any community comprehended

hended therein; muſt promote that of every particular.

3. Thus puniſhment follows the rule directing all other evil, which our idea of infinite goodneſs may convince us, always terminates in ſome event more deſirable than the eſcaping it. It will not be amiſs in the next place to trace the origin of vengeance, which we ſhall not find ariſing immediately from the divine nature, as goodneſs and equity do, but from the conſtitution of the creatures, rendering it a neceſſary ſpring in the hand of Providence for working out its gracious purpoſes and ſecuring the accompliſhment of its plan. We know by experience that God has been pleaſed to intermingle a portion of evil among his works, and this may be diſtinguiſhed into three kinds: firſt labour, ſelf-denial and inconveniences, we are inſtructed to ſubmit to voluntarily for the good fruits to be gathered from them, or by rules eſtabliſhed by others upon the knowledge of their expedience; next, diſeaſes, ſiniſter accidents and infirmities of old age, brought upon us by the courſes of nature or fortune; and thirdly, puniſhment inflicted by the act of ſome ſuperiour power, to drive us into a tenour of conduct we ſhould not have purſued without.

I know ſome have holden all the trouble, laborioufneſs and diſaſters of life, to be conditions annexed to human nature, in conſequence of offences committed in a former ſtate: but if ſo, they fall within our definition of puniſhment above given, for though they cannot have the proper effect here, they may make us examples to ſome other Beings, or to ourſelves in ſome future ſtate, wherein we may have faculties given to diſcern the cauſes of them. Yet we cannot regard them as ſuch now, becauſe we cannot know for what miſbehaviour they are inflicted; and therefore they can be no warning to us what practices to avoid. I know likewiſe that man too often puniſhes the fellow creatures in his power, for diſobedience of his commands given without any regard to their benefit, but ſolely for his own advantage or humour. As when the lordly Weſt-indian tortures his poor Negroes for not doing more than they could do in cultivating his plantations: whoſe produce he never means to ſhare among his ſlaves, but ſends it all to market to raiſe wealth for ſupplying his own wanton and waſtefull luxury. But God, as we obſerved before, has no advantage of his own, nor humour, to conſult: ſo can give his commands for none other end than the advantage and happineſs of his creatures, nor puniſh upon other

other motive than to enforce obedience to thoſe commands, and thereby ſecure the benefits conſequent thereupon.

4. Therefore the divine commands may be regarded as the advices of an indulgent tender parent or unerring monitor, inſtead of the injunctions of an Almighty Governour: and muſt operate as ſtrongly in one light as the other upon a prudent man, having an earneſt attachment to his own intereſt. If I had never heard of the Decalogue, nor had other rule to go by beſide that left with the Reader at the end of my firſt Volume, of taking care of myſelf whenever reduced to a condition wherein I could not be the better for any good befalling others; yet ſuppoſe an Angel were ſent from Heaven to ſtand before me, with authentic and undoubted credentials of his miſſion, and delivered his meſſage in the following tenour.

Thus ſaith the Lord Almighty, the Creator and Governour of all things viſible and inviſible. Behold I have given thee powers of action, to do this or that as thou pleaſeſt: I have given thee freedom of Will, to chooſe between the things before thee: and I have given thee deſire, to quicken thee up to activity, that thou loſe not the uſe of thy powers. What haſt thou now to do, but to fulfill thy heart's deſire in any way whereto thou canſt

turn thy hand? For I have bound thee by no law, nor hung any reſtriction over thee, which might withold thee from doing the thing that is in thy mind. Becauſe I am mild and gracious, and my mercy endureth for ever: neither is there wrath or vengeance before me. Am I a man, that I ſhould ſuffer paſſion? or the ſon of man, that I ſhould reſent or be angry? Can injury approach me, that I ſhould be vexed: or damage be done me that I ſhould retaliate? Therefore fear not my terrors, for there are none with me: nor my judgements, for I do not execute them. For I delight to do good, and not evil. My beloved office which I have choſen for myſelf is to guide, not to rule; to admoniſh, not to puniſh.

I behold the preſent, and future: the iſſues of events are before me: and I alone know unerringly what is good. Have not I the Lord created the heavens and the earth? Are they not interwoven together in one univerſal tiſſue, connecting all natures, viſible and inviſible, by one indiſſoluble chain of cauſes and effects? But have I done more work than mine eye can ſurvey? are there any limits to mine intelligence: or any line in my plan ſo minute as to eſcape me? Do not I then know the means of gratifying the deſire of happ- implanted in my creatures, and all the turnings

turnings in the road of expedience: or want I loving kindneſs and bowels of compaſſion, to lead them thereinto by proper directions, according to their ſeveral natures? To man I have given reaſon and forecaſt, to diſcern the things at a diſtance, and guide him into the way that leadeth to his peace. And if I have not beſtowed theſe in ſufficient meaſure to anſwer all his occaſions, I will vouchſafe him other lights to ſupply the deficiency, that nothing needful be witholden from him. For this cauſe have I ſent my meſſenger to declare unto thee what thou waſt not able to diſcern by thine own ſagacity. Hearken unto his admonition, for I have put into his mouth the words of wiſdom and truth.

Know then, that if thou ſhalt worſhip Chance, or Neceſſity, an uncreated Nature, or any other God beſides me.

If thou ſhalt reſt thy dependence upon anything in the viſible heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or that cometh forth from the bowels of the earth.

If thou ſhalt caſt aſide thy reverence of my Majeſty, or ſwear by my name to the thing that is not, or uſe it lightly until it become an empty ſound in thy mouth.

If thou ſhalt lay out thy whole time upon thy worldly concerns, thy pleaſures and thy fancies: or truſting to the ſtrength of thy rea-

ſon, ſhalt neglect thoſe expedients neceſſary for preſerving alive the remembrance of me in thine imagination.

If thou ſhalt withhold due honour from thy ſuperiors whom I have ſet over thee, whether of thy houſe or of thy people to preſerve order and œconomy therein.

If thou ſhalt deſtroy or hurt thy brother without lawful warrant.

If thou ſhalt indulge the luſts of thy fleſh, which thou ſhareſt in common with the beaſts.

If thou ſhalt purloin thy neighbours goods, or overreach him when ye commune together in your dealings.

If thou ſhalt charge him falſely with that for which the judge will give ſentence, or aſperſe his character in the ſtreets, or calumniate him in ſecret.

If thou ſhalt harbour a deſire of getting away from him his poſſeſſions, or his reputation, or the thing wherein he delighteth, or whatſoever is valuable unto him.

Know that in ſo doing thou acteſt foolishly, for by all theſe things thou wilt loſe far greater enjoyment than thou canſt gain for the preſent, and bring down intolerable miſchiefs upon thy head: which ſhall afflict thee ſorely, and make thy heart ſicken with deſire to be delivered from them, but in vain; for thy deſire

fire ſhall no where find gratification. Becauſe the order of nature is ſo eſtabliſhed, and the chains of connection between thy preſent and thy future ſtate ſo carried on, that the iſſue will ſurely fall out as I have forewarned thee.

See now, I have ſet good and evil before thee this day: chooſe therefore whether of the twaine liketh thee beſt. Nor murmur againſt me as a hard maſter: for I ſet thee no taſk, lay thee under no commands, nor turn thee from the path thou wouldeſt go by my threatenings: but leave thee to thine own judgement and prudence, to conduct thee into the courſe they ſhall repreſent to thee the moſt deſirable.

Now upon ſuppoſition of ſuch a declaration coming from the fountain of knowledge and truth, I appeal to any man of common ſence, and the leaſt forethought of anything beyond the preſent moment, whether it would not be as incumbent upon me to follow the admonition, as if I had ſeen a viſible appearance deſcending upon mount Sinai, ſurrounded with thunders and lightenings and ineffable glories, engraving the ſame with a finger upon two tables of ſtone, and ſubjoining a denunciation underneath, The ſoul that keepeth not all the words of this writing ſhall ſurely be cut off. So there needs no more than to enlighten our underſtandings, that we might diſcern the

natural conſequences of our actions, to make the paths of righteouſneſs eligible: for we ſhould ſee her ſo cloſely embraced by prudence and intereſt, that we could not know which was which: nor would any other road be the right, were there no future judgement, than that we are driven into by the terrors of it.

5. Nevertheleſs I ſhould be very averſe againſt perſuading mankind, if I could do it, into a belief that ſuch a meſſage had ever been really delivered: and very ſorry to have ſuch a deluſion gain credit upon myſelf. For tho' it would make no alteration in what is right, nor render other meaſures expedient to be purſued than are ſo already: yet I fear it would make a fatal alteration in our conduct. For how much ſoever we may fancy ourſelves guided by reaſon and prudence, 'tis too notorious by every day's experience, that they have not ſtrength enough to influence our actions. Mr. Locke, altho' miſled at firſt by the notion prevailing among learned men, yet diſcovered upon ſecond thoughts, and proved demonſtrably by many inſtances drawn from common life, that good, the greater good, acknowledged and apprehended to be ſuch, does not determine the Will: which conſtantly follows ſatisfaction upon whatever object appearing in the thought. For while the

7. Hence we ſee the origin of vengeance, when found in the breaſt of any wiſe and beneficent Governour: namely, from the imperfection of underſtanding, which cannot diſcover the conſequences of every courſe of behaviour; and from the weakneſs of reaſon, which has not colours lively enough to paint a ſtrong repreſentation of diſtant objects upon imagination, nor force enough to urge deſire to the proſecution of advantages ſhe does diſcern. Thus divine juſtice ſprings, not from the nature of God, but of his creatures; and is a branch of wiſdom, diſcerning and providing the proper ſprings for actuating them in their motions. Therefore we may reſt aſſured that God will take vengeance whenever neceſſary, and will not take it in greater meaſure than neceſſary for the purpoſe intended thereby.

Hence likewiſe we may learn the proper idea of puniſhment, which is that ſpecies of evil annexed by the act of a ſuperiour to ſome kind of behaviour, as a motive to deter from behaving in the like manner for the future. And herein it differs from labour and meer misfortune, which tho' often attendant upon our actions, are not, or ought not to be, a diſcouragement to our repetition of them. For tho' ill ſucceſs may juſtly induce us to alter our conduct, it operates as an information to

our

our judgement, not as an adventitious help to aſſiſt where it was too weak. Nevertheleſs this does not hinder, but that the puniſhment may follow by natural conſequence: it will ſtill retain its effence becauſe the work of nature is the work of God: only then we muſt conceive that God, in ſo conſtituting nature as to bring it on, had a view to that particular conſequence, without which he would not have comprized it in his original plan.

8. But we may obſerve, it is not ſo much actual ſuffering, as the terror of it, that operates upon freewill, wherefore it is not neceſſary that puniſhment ſhould be univerſal or perpetual: becauſe a ſeverity gone thro' may dwell upon the remembrance of the ſufferer, and ſpread a terror among multitudes, ſo as to anſwer the effect wanted upon their minds. In this light of puniſhment it appears, that the party undergoing it does a ſignal ſervice to his fellow creatures, by exhibiting to them an example of utmoſt importance, and neceſſary to preſerve them in happineſs: for which ſervice, I ſee nothing in our ideas of our gracious Governour, that ſhould hinder his making him amends; I do not ſay reward him, for this would be againſt reaſon, becauſe he underwent it not willingly nor for the public good; but repay him the coſt he has been put to compulſorily. If puniſhment be

neceſſary,

vaſt numbers to concur in procuring it, does not influence us to action: there needs ſomething more prevalent to be annexed for giving it activity and vigour. And this we cannot doubt but God has provided in his conſtitutions of nature: for he eſtabliſhes them in wiſdom, and adapts his cauſes reſpectively to the ſubjects whereon they are to operate. To matter he has given the capacity of impulſe and neceſſary agency, directed by ſuch well policied laws, as that every atom performs its office in carrying on the ſtupendous courſes of nature, and preparing for events to fall out many ages to come: to brutes he has given appetites and inſtinct, guiding them to do all the little ſervices required at their hands: to man he has given freedom of Will, determined by motives urging him to the choice of ſuch actions within his narrow ſphere of power, as conduce moſt effectually to the general good of the creation. But ſince he has not afforded him underſtanding large enough to diſcern this good, and the way by which he contributes towards it; nor ſenſibility to be touched with objects removed to a great diſtance; nor penetration to ſee the value of ſmall powers in conjunction with thoſe of other agents: he has ſupplied the deficiency by providing other incitements to turn his ſteps into the way that full intelligence

hardened his heart in like manner. And it is all one whether he apprehends this hardening effected by a ſupernatural act, or by nature, education and the popiſh artifices of the magicians: for there is nothing in nature or her productions or the occurrencies paſſing among them, unleſs by divine appointment or permiſſion.

But if what has been here argued in favour of hardened ſinners ſhall ſeem to him an encouragement to liſt himſelf in the number, let him reflect upon the conſiderations on that head in the laſt Chapter: where he will find, that altho' my notion of the compenſation ſhould be right, (which I will not enſure him, as never pretending to infallibility) yet does it give no encouragement to run himſelf upon intolerable ſufferings; becauſe at beſt he will have no more than a bare compenſation, nor gain the leaſt tittle of advantage in the bargain over us, who think it deſerving our moſt ſtrenuous and uninterrupted endeavours to eſcape them.

9. This idea of puniſhment being a beneficial proviſion, eſtabliſhed for preſerving order and good rule in the world, may explain the juſtice of puniſhing children for the faults of their parents. For juſtice being an offſpring of wiſdom, will always ſhape her courſe wherever neceſſity and expedience lead

lead. But when the parents are dead and gone, their perſonal puniſhment, being unſeen here, can have no effect upon mankind: therefore if an example be neceſſary, it muſt be made upon their deſcendants. Or if they were known to ſuffer in their own perſons, ſtill the terror is greater, when the miſchief ſpreads to their whole family and dependants. Accordingly the civil laws often confer good and evil upon the children for their father's ſake: and nature entails diſeaſes, poverty and impotence, upon the deſcendants of debauched and vicious anceſtors. Nor will it avail to alledge, that this comes to paſs by natural conſequence, for nature is the work of God: and if in making this proviſion we will allow him to have had in view the good we ſee reſulting from it, this will bring it under our definition of puniſhment.

But thoſe who raiſe this objection conceive of God as puniſhing in anger: and then indeed it would be an unbecoming thought, to imagine him angry with the innocent for offences committed by the guilty. Therefore one would think our experience, that ſometimes he does involve the innocent in his puniſhments, might convince them that neither anger, nor any intrinſic eſſence of guilt, is his motive in puniſhing. Another baſis they build their objection upon is, the injury

done to the innocent: but this baſis ſtands upon none other ground than their apprehending him to act occaſionally, and that he never thought of puniſhing the children until rouzed to vengeance by the wickedneſs of the father. But ſurely thoſe who pretend to a larger compaſs of reaſon than other people, might comprehend that God, at the formation of a world, may have his whole plan lying diſtinctly before him, and determine every good or evil event to befal his creatures.

Now whether they hold a pre-exiſtent ſtate, in which caſe there will be none other evil than that of puniſhment, they may take for granted that the child deſerved what it ſuffers, by ſome former miſbehaviour. Or whether they believe every birth an original creation, in which caſe there will be prudential evils, ſuch as hard labour, ſelf-denial, poverty and diſaſter, ſent for ſome good ends to be produced by them; they may truſt the divine wiſdom, which often works out many ends by one and the ſame means, to contrive that the ſame evil ſhall prove both prudential and punitory. In either caſe there is no injury done the child, whoſe concern lies only with the quantity of evil he undergoes: 'tis no matter of what ſpecies it is, or by what channel derived, ſo long as it is no greater in meaſure

meaſure than was judged proper to be allotted him upon his own account. The Jews cruſhed under the tower of Siloam felt the ſame pain and ſuſtained the ſame damage, as if they had been ſinners above all other Jews: or as if an Angel had overthrown it upon their heads, declaring he came down to take vengeance for the idolatries of their anceſtors. So a child, allotted a certain portion of pain or diſtreſs or infirmities, receives no injury, whether they be brought upon him by nature, or accident or the wicked courſes of his father: nor is he hurt by their ſerving for an example, to deter other parents from bringing the like miſery upon their children.

10. But ſince offences muſt needs come, this ſuggeſts a reaſon for the unequal diſtribution of juſtice here on earth, for the ſlowneſs of vengeance, and why ſome notorious villains paſs their whole lives in a courſe of uninterrupted ſucceſs and ſecurity. For were puniſhment to follow cloſe upon the heels of tranſgreſſion, and the difference between good and bad made obvious to every eye, it muſt totally put a ſtop to offence: duty would become inſtinct, and rectitude the object of ſenſe. So we ſhould have no uſe for habits of virtue, or exerciſes of reaſon: which ſeem growing powers within us, deſtined for greater ſervices than we can perform [redacted]

them in theſe gloomy tabernacles and clumſy bodies we inhabit. And tho' offences muſt needs come, there are other uſes of their coming beſides that of making puniſhment juſt: for God produces good out of evil, which good muſt then be loſt, unleſs the evil productive of it were permitted.

'Tis true, as we have obſerved before, that God often cauſes one proviſion to anſwer ſeveral purpoſes, and ſo may make moral evil, as well as natural, at the ſame time both prudential and punitory: but it is not apparent from experience that he always does ſo. And indeed if offence were not neceſſary, it would not have been permitted, and conſequently there would have been no neceſſity for puniſhment; whoſe uſe being only to reſtrain offence within due bounds, could have been none had there been nothing to reſtrain. Hence it follows there is a difference made between offences, which tho' all equally obnoxious to juſtice, do not all draw after them their reſpective adequate puniſhment. For when wiſdom has adjudged the proper bounds to be ſet to offence, mercy witholds the arm of juſtice from taking vengeance where it is not neceſſary. But what elſe can we conceive to make the difference between pardonable and puniſhable offences better than repentance? For this, if it does not take away,

yet

yet certainly leſſens the neceſſity of puniſhment, by rendring it needleſs with reſpect to the party himſelf: becauſe his amendment works the ſame effect upon his future conduct as was intended by puniſhing him. But if the firſt offence were conſtantly forgiven, it would be looked upon as a general licence to offend once: or if repentance were admitted at any time to wipe off old ſcores, it would encourage mankind, as we find the notion of it does many of them, to ſin on without ſcruple, preſuming upon the ſponge of a diſtant repentance. For we ſee that neither God nor man will accept of repentance in all caſes indiſcriminately: let the debauchee or the leacher repent never ſo ſincerely, he ſhall not preſently deliver himſelf from the diſeaſes which God, by his laws of nature, has annexed as a puniſhment to his vices. And I think it cannot do either hurt to Religion, or violence to reaſon, if we were to ſuppoſe that repentance, however it may abate, does never wholly take off, the puniſhment due to ſins already committed: ſo that the principal, and that no contemptible, benefit accruing from it, is to prevent the heaping up further ſtores of vengeance by future offences.

If this be ſo, we have no reaſon to be grieved at any thing we ſuffer here for our miſbehaviour: becauſe then we have paid our pe-

nalty, which would have been exacted from us ſome time or other. This opinion, while it leaves the expedience even of a death-bed repentance, ſhows it leſs valuable than an earlier, or than a life ſpent in piety and virtue: ſo that without cutting off all hopes from any, it removes the common excuſe for delay under pretence that the buſineſs may be done as well at another time: for tho' it might be done another time, if you were ſure of having another time to do it in, yet it can never be done ſo well nor to ſo good effect as now. Therefore it ſeems not improbable, that no man carries with him out of the world ſo great a load of ſins as to merit intolerable ſufferings: nevertheleſs the difference is very material between man and man. For the wicked, beſides the long liſt of debts already contracted, carries with him an inveteracy of evil habits, that will prompt him to contract more: ſo that he can never clear his ſcore, becauſe new articles will multiply as faſt as he pays off the old ones. And this is agreable to the general belief, that the reprobate ſhall abound in moral evil as much as in natural. On the other hand the righteous and truly penitent, carrying with them a diſpoſition to act rightly, wherein they may perſevere after being delivered from the temptations of the body, will have nothing wanting

to compleat their happineſs, but to fetch up their old arrears.

11. The ſame origin we have aſſigned for vengeance, gives birth to the other branch of juſtice reſpecting rewards. But 'tis not every good, nor the thouſandth part of that abounding throughout the univerſe, proceeds from juſtice: for we muſt diſtinguiſh between reward and bounty. That ample portion of happineſs allotted the creatures in ſome part or other of their Being, we can aſcribe to nothing elſe than pure unmerited bounty: and is itſelf the ultimate end, or at leaſt the ultimate we can conceive, cauſing that bounty to flow; being not given as a means of effecting any thing ſubſequent, nor in conſideration of any former behaviour. Nevertheleſs it is not poured upon us by an immediate act of omnipotence, but powers are given us to work it out for ourſelves and one another by our own activity duly exerted in our ſeveral ſtations. And this alone might ſuffice to make us beſtir ourſelves effectually, if we had largeneſs of underſtanding to diſcern, and ſtrength of mind to purſue it before preſent gratification. But ſince we have not always a knowledge of the good effects of our meaſures, nor feel them weigh with us when removed too far, nor can diſtinguiſh the avail of our induſtry in conjunction with many fellow la-

bourers: it becomes neceſſary that ſome part of the bleſſings aſſigned us ſhould be brought nearer to our view, and annexed to certain actions in ſuch meaſure as may touch our deſire, in order to ſerve as incitements to purſue the courſes of behaviour moſt beneficial to our intereſts. And theſe encouragements are what we may properly underſtand by rewards: which are the proviſions of wiſdom rather than the largeſſes of bounty, and given not ſo much for their own ſakes as for ſomething they are calculated to produce.

Thus juſtice in both her branches ſprings from the narrowneſs and weakneſs of our faculties: for tho' expedience be the foundation of merit, nevertheleſs, as we have ſaid in our Chapter upon honour, which is one ſpecies of reward, ſo every other ſpecies in general belongs to things, not always where they are uſefull, but where it may be uſefully conferred upon them. For where we have prudence enough to diſcern the uſefulneſs of meaſures and to purſue them, there needs no encouragement of reward: whoſe uſe is only to ſupply the deficiences of prudence, and conduct us along a road of expedience we wanted light or vigour to travel thro'.

Nor can we fail to ſee this idea confirmed if we look into the common tranſactions of life: while a man can attend properly to the management

management of his family, his eſtate or his buſineſs, upon contemplation of the expedience, or by a habit he has acquired, he wants nothing more for his benefit: but if he finds himſelf grow remiſs and indolent, what can he do better than conſider what the world will ſay of him, or he ſhall think of himſelf, according as he amends or perſiſts in his negligence? thus giving a ſpring to his induſtry by the terror of ſhame and compunction, or the proſpect of general or ſelf-approbation. We invite children to their taſk by rewards, which when they have gotten a liking or ſeen the expedience of their learning, we lay aſide, or turn to ſome other beneficial acquiſition whereto they have no propenſity. Privileges and immunities are granted to perſons of a particular profeſſion wanted in ſome country: but after the ſucceſs of theſe firſt adventurers is become notorious, thoſe encouragements are no longer needfull. Public honours and emoluments may be regarded as engines of ſtate, ſerviceable to actuate mens endeavours in promoting the public ſervice. Nor might it be amiſs if thoſe in power would conſider them in this light, as matters of reward, not of favour, under the diſpoſal of juſtice, not of ambition or perſonal liking, and to be beſtowed accordingly where moſt conducive to the general good.

good. Nor would it ſave them a little trouble if they could infuſe the like notion into ſuch as teaze them perpetually at their levees: ſo as not to think themſelves entitled to aſk for honour or preferment, unleſs when the conferring it would prove an example encouraging to ſome uſefull conduct.

12. It is remarkable, that generoſity gains greater applauſe than frugality, altho' equally a virtue, inſomuch that noble and generous are become ſynonimous terms: the reaſon of which is becauſe applauſe is neceſſary to the one, to overcome that greedineſs of temper inclining men to engroſs every thing to themſelves; whereas the expedience and convenience viſible to every conſiderate perſon are ſufficient inducements to the other. Hence we may learn that virtue is not laudable in herſelf, her value ariſing from the good fruits ſhe bears; but approbation, whether of others or our own, is annexed to ſtimulate us in the purſuit of her. And this approbation reſting ſometimes upon a phantom aſſuming her likeneſs, nothing can better cure the deluſion than to examine what fruits we may expect to gather from the conduct we follow. Therefore it is miſchievous to fix our eye too ſtrongly upon the beauties of virtue, or more than neceſſary to keep up our ſpirit in running her courſes vigorouſly: becauſe it will be rather

rather apt to engender pride and vanity than to promote her intereſts.

Hence we may account for the peculiarities of the Stoics, who placing the goodneſs of virtue ſolely in her intrinſic laudableneſs, became the moſt preſumptuous and arrogant of mortals, and entertained the moſt whimſical notions of virtue that ever were invented. But the expreſſion ſo current among them of virtue being her own reward, which relates to the ſelf-approbation ſhe conſtantly draws after her, might ſhow that approbation is not the thing which firſt makes her recommendable; for reward, in the nature of it, is ſomething annexed arbitrarily to gain our eſtimation to a procedure which had a value before, grounded upon ſome other bottom.

Nor can I find the Stoics leſs romantic upon the article of happineſs than the Epicureans; which latter placed it wholly in ſenſitive pleaſure, and inſiſted that the wiſe man might make any ſenſation pleaſant meerly by willing it: ſo that when roaſting in Phalaris's bull, he had nothing elſe to do than cry out, How delightfull is this warmth to my ſenſes! and the pain would inſtantly vaniſh. But the Stoic utterly deſpiſes pleaſure and pain, as having no exiſtence unleſs in the opinion of fools and madmen; and places his happineſs in the amiableneſs of rectitude.

What

What then has he to do, when thruſt into the burning bull? only to cry in like manner, How delightfully lovely is rectitude! whoſe charms I now poſſeſs; for I certainly act right in ſtaying here, becauſe I cannot get out.

13. Now if we turn to the adminiſtration of affairs in this world by the government of providence, we ſhall find there are rewards annexed to ſeveral courſes of proceeding. Health is the natural reward of temperance, plenty of induſtry, content of humility, hope of piety. Men often find profits when they leaſt expected it, ariſing viſibly from their having acted right: and whoſo caſteth his bread upon the waters ſhall ſometimes find it again after many days. It cannot be denied that theſe things prove an encouragement to well doing: and it can as little be denied that the proviſions of heaven are made with a view to thoſe effects we ſee them produce. And perhaps moſt of the good things we enjoy may be intended to work the effect of rewards, by leading into practices and diſpoſitions of mind, whoſe uſes extend to diſtant regions and times, whither we cannot trace them; and ſo given primarily for our future benefit, rather than our preſent enjoyment. Yet we may eſteem the latter conſideration likewiſe to have a ſhare in the proviſion: for

it

it is not incongruous for bounty to join in the same work with virtue. Or if the latter must take her course, since there are two roads by which she may guide, or turn her upon the lowery end of reward, rather than the rock-pointed cruelty of punishment.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that the distribution of reward, as well as punishment, is very unequal in this world: and that of equal good deeds, as well as equal offences, some meet with their desert, while others go unnoticed. But this need not prove a stumbling block: for justice having always a respect to future expedience, will neither reward nor punish, unless where necessity for example sake. If she were to do otherwise she would overthrow her own purpose. For did the adequate reward constantly attend every good deed, virtue must lose her esteem and become self-interest: because the eye fixing always upon the profit, satisfaction and desire could not be translated to the conduct obtaining it. Man indeed must follow his rules of justice implicitly or else he would lose his way, because he seldom stands in a situation to discern the reasons of them: but whenever he can proceed upon discretion, he apportions his rewards according to the services he expects resulting from them, not according to the intrinsic goodness of the deed;

as we have ſeen already in the inſtances produced a little while ago.

14. Divines have always made the unequal diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments a proof of a future life, that there may be room for juſtice to ſettle the accounts ſhe leaves unfiniſhed here. Now it muſt needs be owned that the view of juſtice we have exhibited deprives them the benefit of that argument in the manner they handle it. For juſtice reſpecting only example, when ſhe has made her diſtribution ſufficient to reſtrain offence within proper bounds, and nouriſh virtue to the proper degree of maturity, has executed her taſk; nor has anything further to do with the balancing of accounts. Yet they need not be angry with me too haſtily, for when we come to confer notes together, provided we do it in the amicable calmneſs of Chriſtian charity, the difference will be found meerly nominal, not real. For the diſtinction I make between the Attributes of Equity and Juſtice, I believe is a new one; the latter being currently underſtood as a general term, comprehending them both. So that I may hope to ſatisfy my complainants, only by changing my ſtile without changing my ſentiments: for I have employed a whole Chapter to ſhow that juſtice, taken in this comprehenſive latitude, requires a balancing of accounts in ſome future

ture form of Being; and that with greater exactneſs and more univerſal equality, than I fear ſome of them will forgive me for.

But if they would examine diſtributive juſtice apart, it would puzzle them to make out any demand upon that; for though God will not puniſh unleſs for offence, yet nobody can deny him a right to pardon where there has been offence: therefore if I ſuffer no more than my deſerts, I have no injury done me, although the like ſhould be remitted to another, nor would it do me any ſervice to have him receive them in another life. As to reward, the moſt orthodox can hardly lay claim to that upon the ſcore of juſtice, for when we have done our beſt, we are ſtill unprofitable ſervants: therefore it is of pure unmerited bounty that God gives any reward at all, and if he withold it from me, ſhall my eye be evil becauſe he is good and gracious to another? or what damage does his being ſo gracious do me, for which I ſhould be entitled to receive amends in another life?

Nevertheleſs the unequal diſtribution of good and evil upon earth has been conſtantly thought evidence of a future account, by all religious and conſiderate perſons; which ſhows plainly that the perſuaſion of a divine equity is more generally entertained and more ſtrongly rivetted in men's mi[redacted]

they themſelves are aware of: or than they care to own, when they would ſet up a title to peculiar privileges, or juſtify their contempt of inferiour creatures, or their deteſtation of heretics and of their delinquent brethren. And this general conſent I may take as no ſmall confirmation of what has been delivered in former Chapters: for I am never ſo well ſatisfied with my own thoughts as when I find them co-incide with thoſe of other people.

Thus our future expectations reſt upon the goodneſs and equity, not the juſtice of God: his goodneſs affording the proſpect of much greater proportion of good than evil in the univerſe, and his equity enſuring us our particular ſhare of it. Nor does this leſſen their ſtrength, for ſo our hopes be well grounded, tis no matter whether they ſtand upon one Attribute or another: or rather they will ſtand firmer and ſecurer when placed upon their proper ſolid foundation, than upon one that with fair examination may be found hollow and unſtable.

15. But though diſtributive juſtice alone cannot enſure us any future fruits of our well or evil doing here, yet it may lead into a train of conſequences that may bring us to the expectation of them. For ſince proviſion has been made for deterring from vice and inviting

ing

ing to virtue, we cannot doubt but there are ſome important uſes for which ſo much care has been taken: and ſince we find the diſpoſitions of mind generated by theſe proviſions often tend little or nothing to the advantage of mankind or improving the accommodations of life, we can as little doubt they yield more plentifull fruits elſewhere. Then reflecting on our own individuality and unperiſhable nature, together with our two primary properties of perceptivity and activity, whereby we ſhall remain for ever capable of good and evil; and contemplating the divine wiſdom which does nothing in vain: we cannot ſuppoſe our exiſtence and faculties given us for no purpoſe, but that we ſhall have an intereſt in the proviſions made for future uſes. But what likelier uſes can we imagine of the diſpoſitions contracted in our preſent courſe, than to fit ourſelves for that we are to run hereafter? And how can we imagine ourſelves fitted for any particular courſe, after being totally diſunited from all corporeal mixture?

But men deceive themſelves, as we have obſerved formerly, in their diſtinctions between body and mind, for want of making their ſeparation clean, but taking ſome part of the former into their idea of the latter: and ſo place the talents, the genius, the

habits and ſtores of knowledge, in the mind itſelf. Whereas we have found upon a carefull examination in the courſe of theſe enquiries, that our perceptions are according to the ſtate of our judgement or fancy, being nothing elſe than the diſcernment of objects, expedient or pleaſing or ſtriking to our notice. But the mind or purely ſpiritual part, being an individual, has no parts, one whereof might diſcern the other, yet the object diſcerned muſt be diſtinct from that which diſcerns: ſo that what ſhe diſcerns can be neither herſelf nor a part of her, nor any thing contained in her, but ſomething corporeal preſenting different objects according as diverſly moved or modified. Thus we have no ground in experience, nor any reaſoning we can draw from thence, to conclude that the mind can receive any habit or quality or alteration from what paſſes with us in life: nor that there is any eſſential and intrinſic difference between one mind and another. Therefore if there be a difference between departed ſouls, it muſt ariſe from ſome remains of their material organization carried with them.

Far be it from me to deny, that it lies in the power of God to confer good or evil by his own immediate act: but far be it from any other to deny, that it lies alſo in his power to do it by certain ſtated laws of nature;

ture; for nature with her whole hoſt of ſecond cauſes, take direction in their every movement from his word. Nor can we plead authority to determine the point; for that only tells us he will deal differently with the good and with the wicked, but tells not the manner otherwiſe than by figurative deſcriptions, to make ſenſible to our imagination ſo much as it imports us to know concerning the event: which whether produced directly by the hand of God, or brought to paſs by the miniſtry of ſecond cauſes, is equally his dealing. So the former manner is meer hypotheſis, ſupported by no poſitive proof, but the latter ſtands confirmed by experience of his uſual manner of dealing here below: where we ſee all events brought about by the operation of nature or chance or free agents. And for the ſupernatural works recorded, they appear to have been performed for manifeſtation of his power to dull and ſtiff-necked mortals: nor can we ſuppoſe them employed out of neceſſity, for want of other means in his hand to have accompliſhed his purpoſes.

16. Thus if we examine all our ſtores of experience, we ſhall find no evidence of a variation of power or quality or character among minds: nor that any one of them is not capable of perceptions received, and uſing corporeal inſtruments employed, by any other;

nor yet that their union with body muſt be neceſſary and perpetual. For tho' we know of no perceptions unleſs received by impreſſion from matter, yet matter may ſerve their uſes by occaſional application without a vital conjunction. From whence it appears there is no ground in natural reaſon to imagine, that if ever they get wholly diſengaged from all corporeal mixtures, there ſhall be any difference of condition among them, either in reſpect of their endowments or their enjoyments or their offices: unleſs as they may employ themſelves to aſſiſt occaſionally in particular ſervices for carrying on the general good.

There is no doubt but God can make a difference to what degree he pleaſes: but what evidence is there that he will? or what can we conceive that ſhould incline him to do ſo? Not bounty, for that extends to all alike, being no reſpecter of perſons. Nor reſentment, for he harbours none. Nor damage ſuſtained, for he can receive none, neither hath any defeated his Will. Nor yet juſtice, for that reſpects not the paſt as its ultimate point of view, but aims in all her meaſures at working alterations of habit and diſpoſition; which have no place in naked ſpirit, being ſeated in that part of our material compoſition vulgarly made a part of the mind. Or if there be

a communication of perceptions and mutual intercourſe between ſpirits; what ſhould induce them to behave variouſly to one another? What reſentment or favour can there be, where there is no paſſion? What diſlike or partiality among brethren, where there is no diverſity of character? all children of the ſame father, between whom there is no claim of primogeniture, nor diviſion of ſeparate portions, but all tenants in common of the ſame inexhauſtible eſtate.

Now if any body ſhall ſtill inſiſt that there is an eſſential and characteriſtic difference between mind and mind, becauſe there may be ſo for any thing that we can demonſtrate to the contrary: or that God deals arbitrarily with his creatures, having his elect and his reprobates, becauſe he has full power and authority to deal with them as he pleaſes: or that a communication between ſpirits cannot ſubſiſt, becauſe we cannot try the experiment to aſcertain it: or that there cannot be ſenſe, intelligence, activity and enjoyment, in a body too minute to touch our ſenſes, becauſe we cannot produce an inſtance of any ſuch thing: I ſhall beg leave to put him in mind, that 'tis he who builds upon hypotheſis and negative proofs, not I. For I endeavour to take experience for my guide, while I can have her aſſiſtance; and with reſpect to things in-

ſible, where ſhe fails me, or teaches that they muſt be different from the ſcenes ſhe exhibits, I try to build my conceptions upon the beſt ideas I can form of the divine Attributes, and the proceedings of Providence lying within my obſervation, as the ſureſt and only ſtable ground I have to reſt them upon in theſe matters.

17. From all that has been obſerved it ſeems a natural concluſion, that the difference of condition between particular perſons ſhall ſubſiſt no longer than while encloſed in ſome material compoſition: and that we ſhall not get quite clear of all corporeal integuments upon diſſolution of this groſs body; becauſe proviſion is made in this life for uſes that could not take place without them. How many various ſtages we have to paſs thro', or how long our continuance among matter is to laſt, we have no ground even of conjecture to aſcertain. But ſince all theſe things lie under the diſpoſal of wiſdom and goodneſs and equity, we may reſt aſſured that, whereever our lot be caſt, it will be ſuch as ſhall conduce moſt to the general good, wherein we ſhall ſhare our due proportion: that whatever pain or trouble or inconvenience ſhall befall us, will be no more than the exigencies of public ſervice require: and that all the comfort and enjoyment ſhall be afforded and tenderneſs

derneſs ſhown us, that the nature of our occupation will admit. Nor can we ſuppoſe otherwiſe than that, how fine compoſition ſoever our future bodies may conſiſt of, we ſhall ſtill be no more than ſenſitivo-rational animals: and while encloſed within any corporeal integument, altho' our faculties may be larger and our ſight more piercing than now, ſtill we ſhall want that full diſcernment of the general intereſt, and ardency of deſire towards it, ſufficient to actuate us in all parts of our conduct; therefore ſhall need nearer and more ſtriking incitements to keep us in the purſuit of it.

Hence it may be preſumed the province of juſtice extends throughout all the ſtages of animal life, but tho' we can find no uſe for her proceeding to ſettle accounts of former behaviour unleſs we knew the tranſactions of this life were remembred exactly in the next, yet the proviſions of nature ſeem to indicate, that the ſame event ſhall follow as if there were an impartial and rigorous reckoning. For the habits and acquiſitions we get here, being preparatives to fit us for our ſeveral functions hereafter, tho' we leave the habits and acquiſitions themſelves behind, and enter into our new Being a blank paper, yet they muſt have worked ſuch an alteration in our texture and conſtitution, as ſhall give us an aptneſs

to

to renew the old courſes by which we firſt acquired them. So that the wicked will carry with him an obduracy of temper, productive of actions obnoxious to ſeverer puniſhments than any executed upon him here: and the righteous a pliancy of nature obedient to the command of reaſon, which will lead him to merit more glorious rewards than he ever earned here. And the degree of either will correſpond exactly to the courſe of life they have reſpectively followed in their preſent ſtate. Nor do I ſee any thing that ſhould hinder, but that the obduracy may have grown ſo ſtrong in ſome, as to render them incapable of being touched unleſs by the extremity of ſuffering: ſo that they will continue always objects of vengeance, and always ſerve as an example and warning to the reſt of their compatriots.

18. Nor do there want reaſons to perſuade us that the pleaſures and pains of the next world will be much intenſer than any we have experienced in this, if we carefully examine what experience affords us concerning the proceſs whereby they are brought upon us here. When a man receives a blow with a ſtick acroſs his ſhoulders, the ſtick ſtrikes only upon his cloaths, they propagate the blow to the ſkin, the ſkin to his nerves, and the nerves to his ſenſory: which laſt

gives him perception of the ſmart, all the reſt being no more than channels conveying a mechanical impulſe to one another. Had he had no cloaths on, the ſtick would have hurt him more upon his naked back, and had his ſkin been ſtripped off by a bliſter, he muſt have felt ſeverer ſmart from a blow upon the raw fleſh: nor is it an unreaſonable conſequence, that if the like ſtroke could be made upon any nearer channel, it would create a more pungent anguiſh. For we receive all our perceptions from the action of the ſenſory or mental organization: whatever ſtages the impulſe of objects paſſes thro', there is no perception until it puts this in play. From whence it may be preſumed that whenever this ſhall be laid bare to the ſtroke of things external, it muſt take a far ſtronger impulſe therefrom, than while enwrapped within the load of cloaths compoſing this mortal body. And with reſpect to our acuteneſs of diſcernment, we ſtand much in the ſituation of a man at the further end of a long range of rooms, divided from each other by ſaſh doors: who ſeeing nothing of objects without doors unleſs thro' a dozen glaſſes, cannot expect to have ſo diſtinct or clear a view of them as when preſented to his naked eye.

Nor is it an objection that ideas of reflection, operating [illegible]tely upon the mental

tal organs, and wherein they alone are ſuppoſed to be concerned, are leſs ſtrong and vivid than thoſe of ſenſation: for when I think of a perſon juſt gone out of the room, I cannot paint ſo lively a picture of his features upon my fancy, as while he ſtood before me. But this is not always the caſe: for ſometimes a grievous ſmart, or violent terror, will occur afterwards to the mind more powerfully than it did upon the ſenſation. Beſides that we find our ſenſitive pleaſures and pains encreaſed by the concomitant reflection attending them: inſomuch that ſome have denied pain to be an evil, unleſs made ſo by opinion, which is the work of reflection; nor can it be denied that many pains do not touch us, ſo long as we can keep our reflection intent on ſomething elſe.

But tho' ideas of ſenſation, when recalled to the thought, were conſtantly, without exception, fainter than upon their firſt entrance by the ſenſes, yet theſe are only copies of impreſſions made by external objects, and it is no wonder the copy ſhould fall ſhort of the original. Therefore let us make the compariſon with ideas of reflection, ſtrictly ſo called, being not materials imparted from without; but new productions worked from them in the mind, ſuch as our judgements, paſſions and perſuaſions: and we ſhall ſometimes find

find them riſing to ſo high a pitch as to over-power the action of our ſenſes. A ſtrong fit of deſperation or reſentment or love or jealouſy will make men deſpiſe pains and labours, and the moſt terrifying objects ſtanding in their way; and a violent affliction ſtupefies the mind againſt pains and pleaſures and the notice of every thing around her. Since then our mental organization can affect us ſo vehemently without aid of the ſenſes, and when laid open to external objects, without groſſer covering to intervene, is likely to receive more vigorous impulſes: we may expect a much quicker ſenſibility and ſtronger perceptions, when receiving them by that alone, without other channel beyond. Wherefore it is of greater importance to make good proviſion for the health and conſtitution of our future bodies, than of our preſent.

19. How intenſe the ſufferings of another life may be, there is nobody can pretend to gueſs: for experience furniſhes no rule to meaſure them by, nor can we gather any thing concerning things unſeen unleſs from the Attributes. But our idea of goodneſs, which alone can ſet bounds to the neceſſity of juſtice, is ſo imperfect that it fails us upon this occaſion. We know that God is good and will do nothing inconſiſtent with goodneſs: but what is or is [redacted] with

with, we have no certain measure to ascertain. For the permission of evil forcing us to acknowledge some mixture of incompatible with this Attribute, we know not where to stop in our estimation of the quantity. Reason indeed may convince us that every evil is inflicted as a necessary means to bring forth some greater good, yet this leaves us still in the dark: for we know neither the precise quantity of good, nor proportion of one to the other, so can find no rule of admeasurement to compute either the sum or the degree of evil necessary to answer the services of the universe. The enjoyments of this world exceed the troubles and vexations to so visible a degree, that the most miserable wretches upon earth still set a value upon life: nor does death cease to be the king of terrors, even to such as have no apprehension of any thing to come after. And these few who destroy themselves, do it rather to escape from some present pressing uneasiness, than upon a fair computation of the good and evil they might expect. Nor could Epicurus, who was no favourer of Providence, avoid setting down among his list of observations, That pain if long, was light: if grievous, short.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged there are [illegible] shocking to human nature in its contemplation, horrid to th

horrible to feel! racking pains of rheumatiſm and ſtone, and all that long catalogue of diſeaſes deſcribed in Milton's lazar houſe; terrors and lingring deſtructions under the ruins of earthquakes; painfull periſhings by fire; tearings of ravenous beaſts; ſtings of venomous ſerpents; miſerable exits upon bite of a mad dog; fractures, diſlocations or inward bruiſes, by wars or accidents. What barbarities do not ſavage nations exerciſe upon their enemies! What tortures and piecemeal executions have not been practiſed by tyrants and perſecutors! Or what can the wit of man invent more deviliſh than the ingenious cruelties of a popiſh inquiſition!

Nor are there leſs terrible roads in the journey thro' life than in the paſſage out of it. The diſtreſſes of extreme poverty, hunger, nakedneſs, cold and ſcorching heat, the miſchiefs of vice and debauchery; the fatal errors of folly and inconſiderateneſs; the ſufferings of bodily infirmity and conſtitutional diſeaſe; the vexations of injury, oppreſſion and ingratitude; the deſolations of war and invaſion; the preſſure of afflictions, loſſes and ruin; the miſeries of ſhipwréck and comfortleſs lengths of time paſſed on deſolate ſhores or in an open boat, without covering or proviſions or reſpite from labour; the wretchedneſs of ſlavery, where the unhappy negroe

negroe, perhaps a king in his own country, is thrown into a ſtinking hold, kept upon rotton peaſe beſmeared over with tallow greaſe, and then delivered up to the inhuman Spaniard, who works him beyond his ſtrength, and every now and then fells him to the ground with a hatchet, to ſhow his power by way of entertainment to his viſitors.

With ſuch as do not think the negroe worth their concern becauſe his ſkin is black, he cannot talk Engliſh, and was never chriſtened, it would avail little to put them in mind of the miſeries among the brute creation: whom nature has not only ſubjected to the hard ſervices, ſevere uſage and wanton cruelties of man, but has likewiſe inſtructed them to worry, deſtroy and torment one another. The cat plays with the mouſe, cheats him continually with pretences of letting him eſcape, pats him when fainting to make him exert himſelf, a long while before ſhe devours him. The water-ſnake purſues the ſhrieking frog through all his turnings, till ſhe gets his head into her mouth, then ſwallows him by ſlow degrees into her ſtomach, where he lies digeſting for ſome days before he dies. The ſpider has a long ſtruggle to entangle the fly, till at laſt he wraps her up cloſe in his web, and ſits at leiſure ſucking out her vitals. The beetle, whoſe characteriſtic is ſtupidity

and

and unwieldineſs of limbs, beats himſelf down againſt a tree, or overturns himſelf in crawling, and lies ſprawling upon his back; until the little tit-mouſe comes, pecks a hole in his ſide, ſcoops out his entrails, and leaves the hollow carcaſe to crawl about alive.

But to return to thoſe of our own ſpecies with whom we daily converſe and for whom we have a conſideration: they have their private troubles and anxieties, more than they diſcover to us, for nobody knows where the ſhoe pinches ſo well as he that wears it. When men appear together in company, they put on a chearfulneſs upon their countenances, but who knows what grinding diſquietudes they have at home? Unnatural parents, faithleſs wives, diſobedient children, ungratefull friends, deceitfull patrons, approach of ruin in their fortunes, diſappointment of ſchemes they had ſet their hearts upon, reſentment of cutting affronts, animoſities againſt perſons they cannot hurt, ſlights of the world upon their ſuppoſed merit. Add to this the terrors of complexional fear and ſuperſtition: apprehenſions of fires or robbers, dread of the ſmall pox or infectious airs, frights of apparitions, prognoſtics and dreams, doubts about predeſtination, deſperations of a future ſtate, aridities and deſpondencies of Methodiſm, miſgivings of Free-thinking.

We

We may laugh at theſe grievances as fantaſtical, but how fantaſtical ſoever in their cauſes, they are real in their effects; nor are the pains of diſorders in the mind leſs pungent than of thoſe in the body, or of afflictions and diſaſters coming from external cauſes: and perhaps if we could look into the hearts of mankind, we ſhould ſee them ſuffer more from imaginary evils than from real.

Thus we ſee by experience how great a weight and variety of evils are conſiſtent with infinite goodneſs: and may gather from thence how ſtrong muſt be that neceſſity which could introduce them into a plan contrived in mercy and loving kindneſs. Yet as we know not the grounds of this neceſſity, we cannot tell how much ſtronger it may prevail in other ſtages of our exiſtence: nor to what acuter ſenſations, more grievous diſtempers of mind, and more tormenting deluſions, our naked organizations may be liable. So that although we ſhould not think an elementary fire, or a corporeal worm, reconcilable with our philoſophical notions, there may well be puniſhments, if not ſimilar in kind, yet equal in degree, to the ſcorchings of unexſtinguiſhable flames and gnawings of the never dying worm. Therefore notwithſtanding God be good and gracious, there are terrors of the Lord alarming enough, if juſtly apprehended,

[illegible] to excite our contrivance and industry in providing for the health and good condition of our future bodies: that when reduced to them, we may not want activity and disposition to steer safe from the purlieus of vergoyance, and keep under protection of the wide spreading wings of mercy.

But there is an art and discretion to be used in the application of those terrors: for if we dwell upon them only in our retirements, they will generate nothing but a dismal and unavailing affright. Therefore it behoves us to inculcate them then upon our minds in such colours and figures, as may rise readily again in seasons of action and attacks of temptation, and may then be most affecting to our imagination upon a single glance. For I have all along maintained, that use and expedience is the point to be driven at, as well in the conducting of our thoughts as of our outward behaviour.

20. Neither can any body tell precisely of what kind the enjoyments of another life shall consist: but those who go about to point them by figurative representations seem not always to have chosen such as are proper to strike upon the imagination. They [illegible] righteous shall live [illegible] bour, hardship, [illegible] appointment, and [illegible]

from their eyes. So far 'tis well: but this is only a negative happineſs, ſuch as may be found in annihilation: but what actual enjoyment are they to have? Why, they ſhall ſing pſalms all day long and every day. This may be vaſt pleaſure, for ought I know, to a mind rightly tuned, but as our minds are ſtrung at preſent, I believe there is ſcarce any body who would not be tired of ſinging pſalms before half the day was out, or after having ſung out the whole week would have much ſtomach to ſing again on ſunday.

But then they ſhall ſit in white robes, with crowns on their heads, and all be kings. This may weigh much with ſuch as are fond of fine cloaths, and would be prodigiouſly delighted to hear themſelves called, Your Majeſty: but if we are all to be kings, where are our ſubjects? Oh! the toils of government would be troubleſome: but we ſhall be called to the bench to ſit as aſſeſſors in judging the wicked, and triumph over all our enemies. This may have charms with the methodiſts and others of an ill natured religion: but for my part I ſhould eſteem the condemnation of malefactors a burthen rather than an amuſement; I never ſign a mittimus to the houſe of correction, but had much rather it were done by ſomebody elſe; and if I had any enemies I think I ſhould not wiſh to in-

ſult

ſult and triumph over them, or if I did take vengeance upon them, ſhould do it as a matter of neceſſity not of gratification. Beſides, all this will furniſh employment only for the day of judgement: when that day is ended, there will be nothing further to do.

Well, but their enjoyment of the beatific viſion will not ceaſe. I can imagine there may be an extreme delight in the full and clear diſplay of the divine Attributes, particularly that of goodneſs; for I have experienced a proportionable degree of ſatisfaction in the contemplation, ſo far as I have been able to comprehend them. But this is only in my retirements, when I can bring my thoughts to a proper pitch by long and carefull meditation: when I go abroad into the world upon my common tranſactions, I do not find this idea attend me in full vigour and complexion; and believe thoſe who want incitements moſt will be ſcarce feebly touched with the hope of ſeeing God as he is. Beſides, as I have powers of action as well as of reflection, I cannot readily conceive that in a ſtate of bliſs, one of them ſhould remain uſeleſs, nor how enjoyment can be compleat which reſts in ſpeculation alone. In ſhort, all propounded to us in the common harangues upon this ſubject, ſeems to be no more than an Epicurean hea-

ven, a monaſtic happineſs, an undiſturbed pious idleneſs.

But give me for my incitements, a life of activity and buſineſs; a conſtant ſucceſſion of purpoſes worthy a reaſonable creature's purſuit; unwearied vigour of mind; inſtruments obedient to command; exemption from paſſion, which might lead me aſtray; unſatiating deſires of the noble and generous kind; clearneſs of judgement to ſecure me againſt miſtake or diſappointment; company of perſons ready to aſſiſt me with their lights and their helping hand, ſo that we may join together with perfect harmony in that beſt of ſervices, the exerciſe of univerſal charity, in adminiſtring the laws of God and executing his commands. And if I have therewith a largeneſs of underſtanding, theſe occupations need not hinder but that, while buſied in them, I may feaſt upon the contemplation of whatever glorious objects ſhall be afforded me, either in the works of nature or the Author and contriver of them.

Some Religions propound rewards alluring enough to human ſenſe: a Mahometan paradiſe may ſuit very well with Aſiatic luxury: but then ſuch incitements are worſe than none, as being miſchievous to practice. For as one is naturally inclined to enure one's ſelf to the way of living one expects to follow, they

they are better calculated to lead into the road of deſtruction than of happineſs. Nor are our modern enthuſiaſts leſs blamable in flattering their mob with the privilege of inſulting and ill uſing their betters: for of the two, a man is not drawn ſo far aſide from the ſpirit of piety by the thought of poſſeſſing a Seraglio of beautifull wenches, as of having a Lord or a Biſhop bound hand and foot for him to kick and cuff about as he pleaſes.

Therefore in the figures employed to deſcribe the things unſeen, care ſhould be taken to admit nothing groſs or ſenſual, vindictive or ſpitefull: but the buſineſs is to employ ſuch as may be poſſible, innocent and inviting. This is what I have attempted in the three Chapters of the Vehicular and Mundane ſtates and of the Viſion: endeavouring to exhibit a ſcene of things poſſible, ſo as nobody can certainly diſprove them; innocent, ſo as to contain nothing offenſive to good manners or charity; and inviting, ſo as to preſent ſtriking images that may dwell upon the imagination. And I have ſo far ſucceeded, that upon reading them to a very ſenſible man, his remark at the end was, Well, I wiſh all this may be true. Now this was what I intended, and if my Readers ſhall be ready to ſay too, Well I wiſh all this may be true, my purpoſe is ſerved. I do not take upon

to believe it true, they may uſe their judgement or pleaſure upon this point; but meant only to preſent them with an encouraging proſpect they can hold in their eye: and they may find ſolid and ſubſtantial reaſons elſewhere to convince them, that if they take the due method for attaining it, they ſhall enter upon a ſcene of things which will be as well or better for them than if all this were true.

21. As to the puniſhments commonly deſcribed, they are alarming enough to human nature: perpetual burnings, inconſolable remorſe, continual tormentings by devils, inceſſant quarrels and mutual outrages amongſt the damned. To which are added, for taking ſtronger hold upon the imagination, the ideas of darkneſs, howlings, ſcourges, pincers, claws, horns and cloven feet. But theſe things operate ſtrongeſt upon the flegmatic, the weakly and the low ſpirited, who want encouragements rather than terrors: which are more apt to diſmay and ſtupify than rouze them up to activity, and therefore are moſt plentifully laid on by Popiſh prieſts and leaders among ſectaries, who have their private ends to ſerve by the diſmay.

Nor is it always ſafe to follow the beſt authorities too cloſely, for a man may do very wrong by imitating another who has done very right: wherefore human nature, manners

ners and ſentiments muſt be conſidered, and regard had to particular times and countries, congregations and perſons. The Jews, and primitive Chriſtians derived from them or incorporated among them, ſeem to have been a ſerious ſolemn generation, accuſtomed to a pinguid turgid ſtile, as Tully calls the Aſiatic rhetoric, abounding in extravagant metaphors, far fetched alluſions, hard featured images, myſterious and enigmatical allegories, requiring painfull attention to underſtand or miſunderſtand them. Their tempers were ſoured by oppreſſion and public contempt; for it is not in human nature to preſerve an eaſineſs and benignity of mind under continual oppoſition and indignities: therefore they could ſee no reward inviting which had not a mixture of retaliation and triumph, nor was the bliſs of heaven compleat without the ſatisfaction of beholding their perſecutors ſwallowed up in the devouring flames of hell. And being enured to look for ſomething of latent importance in words and ſyllables, might be truſted with any figures, without hazard of turning them into ridicule, for which they had no inclination nor promptitude.

But we moderns living in eaſe and plenty, for the moſt part better fed than taught, affect the lively and amuſing rather than the

pompous and the perplexing: inſtead of labouring to find myſteries in everything, we divert ourſelves with turning everything into jeſt; and have gotten the knack of making a trifle of whatever would naturally be moſt affecting to the imagination. And becauſe our forefathers multiplied words until they confounded themſelves, we are ſo afraid of falling into their dulneſs that we place reaſon in ſmartneſs of expreſſion, and expect to have every difficult point decided in a ſingle ſentence. Thoſe to whom terrors would be moſt ſerviceable, being perſons of ſtrong ſpirits, ſanguine complexions and hardy conſtitutions, able to bear a bang or a burn without flinching, are little touched with bodily pains: and being generally of unlucky diſpoſitions, they delight in broils and ſquabbles, finding themſelves able to make their party good whatever adverſary they have to cope with, and being uſed to abuſe others and receive abuſe themſelves, care not what company they fall into. By foiſting in the word Little, they can reduce any pain to a bearable ſize: for what ſignifies a little ſcorching or a little flogging? and by familiarizing themſelves to the term Damnation, they can wear away all meaning belonging to it, ſo that it becomes a harmleſs ſound, like the chirping of a ſparrow. Then for the worm of conſcience,

ſcience, they have provided an effectual remedy againſt him, for they have ſeared up his mouth with a hot iron that he cannot bite. And the ſooty countenance, horns and cloven feet of Satan, make him the odder figure; ſo he paſſes for an arch comical droll, that hates to be confined by rules, and plays any miſchievous tricks for fun and merriment: therefore he and his imps bear a part in our pantomimes, and we can ſit an hour together to divert ourſelves with their ſurprizing cunning and feats of dexterity.

22. But if we could once catch theſe people in a ſober mood, and prevail on them to lay aſide for a moment their all-healing epithet Little, they might then learn to ſee a difference between the ſharpeſt pains they have experienced, and the violence of unquenchable flames; between temporary ſquabbles they can laugh at when over, and endleſs conteſts with a ſuperiour adverſary who will leave them no reſpite nor inclination for laughing. And if they have a thought of the divine power, in whoſe hand all the ſources of good and evil lie, they muſt ſee that, beſides outward hurts and injuries, they may be tormented with inward pains of ſtone, or joint-racking rheums or other excruciating [illegible] with intolerable thirſts, inſatiable cravings,

cravings, the horrors of melancholy and all dreadfull diſorders of mind. Nor are they ſure of carrying with them that hardineſs of conſtitution they ſo much depend upon: for they muſt leave their ſolid bones, their tough-ſtrung muſcles, their ſtrong-bounding blood, that vigorous flow of animal ſpirits, the ſupport of their preſent bravery; to periſh in the grave; and may be born into new life with the fearfull weakneſs of a woman or helpleſs tenderneſs of a child, apt to be terrified at a word, to ſhudder at a ſhadow, and unable to bear the ſcratch of a needle.

But if they be ſo immerſed in ſenſitive ideas of what they ſee and feel, that they cannot conceive themſelves ever to become different creatures from what they are; let us ſuppoſe, for argument ſake, they ſhall preſerve the ſame ſturdy conſtitution and temper they poſſeſs at preſent; and as they have little notion of God, we may talk to them more intelligibly of the Devil. Perhaps they may have been taught by ſome of thoſe who are ſingly wiſer than convocations and ſynods, that there is no ſuch ſpecies of Beings in nature; but this will avail them little, for they may have met or heard of characters among the human ſpecies excellently well qualified for the office of a tormentor; and it will not much mend the matter, if they be put into the

the hands of a ſavage Canadian, a barbarous Algerine, or unrelenting Spaniſh inquiſitor bred up in the ſcience of torturing and taking cruelty for his ruling principle of action.

But whatever race the Arch-fiend be deſcended from, they muſt not expect to find him the frolic gameſome droll they have ſeen upon Covent garden theatre: but a ſolemn melancholy tormentor loving miſchief for miſchief ſake, going to work with deliberate malice, inveterate rancour and inſatiable cruelty. Nor will he ſhow them fair play in boxing, but take all cowardly advantages, not letting them get up when fallen nor giving them time to breath when fainting, but calling in his imps to hold their arms while he pommels them. And if he have horns or cloven hoofs, they are not for the oddity of his figure, but to punch their eyes or mouths or other tender parts.

And even ſuppoſing what cannot well be ſuppoſed, that they are ſo ſtout as to value all this no more than a flea bite, he will then take ſome other courſe with them: for he is a deviliſh cunning fellow, knows how to find every one's weak ſide and what will plague them effectually. Therefore if he perceives them inſenſible of pain, he will not throw away his brimſtone and his ſcourges upon them, but take ſome other method that ſhall make them

heartily

heartily ſick of his company. He will tantalize them with ſcenes of exquiſite viands and delicious liquors, frothing in the pot or ſparkling in the glaſs, raiſe intolerable thirſts and cravings, and not ſuffer them to touch a drop or a morſel. With a whirl of his Fauſtus wand, he will conjure up a bevy of buxom laſſes, to tempt them with all laſcivious allurements, and cram them with apples from the tree of knowledge, which ſhall raiſe deſire to its utmoſt pitch of burning fury; but take eſpecial care that it ſhall meet with no gratification. He will lay in their way treaſures of gold and jewels carried by helpleſs children, whom when they go to murther for the booty, their arm ſhall wither up, ſo that they may ſtrike and ſtrike again without effect. He will repreſent the Deity as an angry revengefull tyrant, reſolved to have his Will upon them for trifling offences; foreſhow them the particular ſufferings it is his Will to inflict, and how themſelves are continually made inſtrumental to bring on thoſe ſufferings; whereby he will raiſe a worm of reſentment, vexation and deſpair, whoſe bite is ſeverer than that of conſcience they had ſtifled. If he finds them of delicate tempers, he will plunge them into filth and ordure: if courtly, he will conſort them among ſavages and hottentots: if muſical, he will din their ears

all

all day long with ſhrieks and howlings, ſcratching of knives upon one another, and the craſh of broken beams: if proud, he will force them to ſervile drudgeries under command of perſons they deſpiſed, and to receive inſults, contemptuous language and cutting reproaches. Or if they have antipathies againſt particular animals or things, he will accordingly tie them round with knots of vipers, wrap them up in webs for a prey to monſtrous ſpiders, ſhut them cloſe among enormous toads, or cats, or ſtuff their mouths with carrion or rotten cheeſe.

I do not recommend theſe laſt images to be uſed in aſſemblies, becauſe what might affect one man ſtrongly, might appear a joke to others who have not the ſame antipathy. But there is no man without ſome diſtaſtes and averſions he cannot think on without horror: let him then figure to himſelf the ſituation he ſhould moſt vehemently diſlike, and he may be aſſured there are puniſhments in nature which would afflict him as ſorely. But there is no doubt they will be ſharp enough to overcome his obduracy at laſt: therefore he had better get rid of it while he can upon cheaper terms, for the more inveterate it grows, the ſeverer remedies will be requiſite. Or if they be applied juſt below the meaſure ſufficient for working a cure, this will be an

encreaſe

encreaſe of vengeance by prolonging the continuance of that evil diſpoſition whoſe removal would render puniſhment needleſs.

CHAP. XXX.

Duration of Puniſhment.

IF the doctrine of equality maintained in the forgoing Chapters, ſhall appear a novel and heterodox opinion, I hope the candid Reader will do me the juſtice to believe, it was not upon that account I offered it to his conſideration. For I have conſtantly profeſſed, and I think have all along preſerved, a tenderneſs for prevailing ſentiments, and tho' in the exerciſe of that ſober freedom which is the natural right of every thinking man, I may have departed from them for a while, it has been only to return again into the beaten road, and to take what ſeemed to me the ſureſt method of arriving at the practical concluſions commonly drawn from them. Nor am I ſo fond of novelty, or the credit of making diſcoveries that have eſcaped others, as to purchaſe it at the expence of Religion or good manners. If I have any deſire of reputation, it

it is that arising from the character of a discreet and well applied industry in the service of mankind. Therefore notwithstanding this equality appears to me to follow as demonstratively as any conclusion we can draw concerning things invisible, from experience of human nature acting constantly upon motives suggested, from the universal dominion of Providence, governing even freewill by means of those motives, and from the unlimited mercy and bounty of God, extending over all his creatures without partiality or arbitrary proceeding; which I hope will be counted orthodox tenets: nevertheless I should have kept it concealed within myself for fear of disgusting the weakly righteous, whether great scholars or illiterate, if I had not found it a necessary foundation, and indeed the only one I could discern by the light of reason, whereon to place that general interest from whence I apprehend may be deduced the practical rules of life, as well those relating to Religion, as to morality or common prudence.

For how much soever we may flatter ourselves with the notion of noble and generous innate principles, there always lies Self at bottom in every thing we do; and all men constantly pursue their own happiness, tho' by very various ways. One places it in distant

good,

good, another in preſent pleaſure, another in riches or title or ſuperiority or humour or ſelf approbation: but whatever, whether real or fantaſtical, each man apprehends for the preſent moſt ſatisfactory to him, that is the object to which he directs his powers. Therefore if we could touch this univerſal ſpring of action, by ſhowing clearly to every one's apprehenſion that his private intereſt ſtands connected with the general, nothing could more effectually inſpire men with a hearty zeal for promoting one another's benefit, or help to rectify their ſentiments of virtue. Becauſe the Generality conſiſting of individuals, whatever proves beneficial to any one, is an addition of good among the Whole: and becauſe every genuine virtue tends to procure benefit to the whole, or a part of it, or ſome individual contained therein, without more endamaging any other; and whatever does not do ſo, either immediately or remotely, is no virtue, but may be pronounced ſpurious. Yet it muſt be owned, our equality, which we have laboured to cultivate in hopes of bearing ſuch excellent fruits, has one inconvenience attending it: that it is incompatible with an abſolute perpetuity of puniſhment. But as this may be thought of pernicious tendency, by taking off the diſcouragement againſt evil-doing; a conſequence I ſhould be very ſorry

to have given a handle for drawing, I have appropriated this Chapter to obviate that mischief, by shewing that nothing hitherto contained can be justly construed to [illegible] discouragement.

2. But before I enter upon this [illegible], I shall take the liberty to observe [illegible] that lies against the perpetuity of punishment, in the present state of human experience. Justice, in the sense of [illegible] it, requires an exact proportion between the measure of punishment and the [illegible] enough that [illegible] punishment in the [illegible] tion of evil [illegible] person [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

it follows that there muſt be the like immenſe difference of character between the good and the wicked; for elſe the rule of juſtice would be violated. But this we do not find true in experience: for there are all gradations of character, falling by imperceptible degrees, from the moſt perfect man that ever lived down to the moſt abandoned villain.

It may be ſaid we cannot penetrate into the ſecrets of the heart, nor diſcern all the depravity lurking there. This I acknowledge we cannot do with any exactneſs, yet there are none of us who do not undertake to pronounce ſome perſons righteous and others wicked: ſo that we can make a judgement where the caſe is glaring, tho' we cannot always do it critically. Therefore it would be no wonder if we were only puzzled in comparing two good men, to determine which was the beſt; or two bad men, which was the worſt: but we are often egregiouſly deceived in our opinion of good and bad, taking the one for the other, nor can we pronounce upon many perſons we know, to which claſs they belong: that is, we cannot diſtinguiſh between characters as wide aſunder as heaven is from hell. For the ſmalleſt portion of eternal happineſs is infinitely preferable to the mildeſt of eternal ſufferings: and the ſtep from the topmoſt ſummit of hell to the

the loweſt ſeat in heaven, infinitely greater than from thence to the ſeat immediately above, or perhaps I might ſay, to any ſeat reſerved for human ſoul. Nor would it much mend the matter if we were to ſuppoſe a purgatory: for any finite puniſhment followed by endleſs bliſs, is ſtill infinitely more deſirable than endleſs torment.

Thus there is an exact proportion of juſtice between the individuals of either claſs, but between the two claſſes there lies an immeaſurable gap: which would deſtroy all proportion, unleſs there be the like immeaſurable gap ſomewhere among the characters of mankind, which we may preſume muſt be ſo obvious as to ſtrike every eye; ſo that none could ever fail in diſtinguiſhing the claſſes, however they might miſtake in the particular centuries under each. Nor does the fallibility of human judgement concerning the real character of particular perſons remove our objection: for I defy any man to draw, much more any two men to agree in drawing, the character of a ſinner, whether real or fictitious, who if he were ever ſo little better, would be admitted to a portion in eternal glory: or of a righteous perſon, who if he were one degree leſs righteous, would become a ſinner reſerved to eternal ſufferings. Beſides, as the beſt among us have their fail-

ings and we are all ſinners, for there is none that doeth good, no not one: there cannot be that vaſt difference between the moſt oppoſite characters upon earth, between the greateſt of ſinners and the leaſt, as is ſuppoſed to be made in the recompenſes reſpectively allotted them.

3. And thoſe who place ſalvation in faith alone remain liable to the ſame difficulty: for a ſaving faith muſt be right, and it muſt be ſtrong: but there are degrees of rectitude and of ſtrength in faith, as well as any other virtue. Will any man aſſert that every little error in matters of belief, and every falling ſhort of the invincible confidence of a tortured martyr, ſhall exclude from heaven: or every faint and inconſiderate aſſent to the orthodox faith ſecure a place in it? Thus there are degrees of faith and infidelity as well as of morality and immorality. Yet how have doctors differed upon the articles of faith? what endleſs diſputes have they carried on in ſettling the liſt of fundamentals? And one of the moſt ſenſible among them, Chillingworth, has ſhown that fundamentals are relative; that article being ſuch to one man which is not ſo to another, according to their ſeveral lights and capacities. And I think it very happy for the world this matter was never ſettled; becauſe if men knew what was juſt

enough

enough to carry them to heaven, they would not do a ſtitch more than abſolutely neceſſary: whereas being left in uncertainty they muſt uſe all their diligence, for fear a part of it ſhould not be ſufficient to make them ſafe.

But ſuppoſing the articles ſettled, there would ſtill continue the like uncertainty with reſpect to the ſtrength of perſuaſion in them, requiſite to make a ſaving faith. How many pious Chriſtians labour under cruel anxieties upon this head? They receive all the doctrines of their Church without reſerve, ſo their doubt is not upon the rectitude but the livelineſs of their faith. If they go to the Proteſtant Vicar or Popiſh Confeſſor, the latter may give them abſolution upon their paying for it, or the former tell them they want no abſolution upon this account: but neither can inſtruct them how to know at all times, when they have proved deficient and when not. For who can aſſign the juſt meaſure of aſſent that diſtinguiſhes between a dead and a lively faith? or mark out the exact line of ſeparation between the believer and the infidel? ſo that whoſo paſſes it, enters the ſtate of ſalvation; and whoſo falls a hair's breadth ſhort, remains a child of perdition. Which yet, if we regard the diſtribution made by juſtice between the two, ought to be, not a

mathematical line, but a ſpacious gulph, like that which ſeparated Dives from Abraham.

But it is ſaid that juſtice has no concern in this part of the diſtribution: for all have ſinned and all become obnoxious to her never ending ſeverity, until mercy interpoſed to reſcue a certain number. What then, are not all the Attributes infinite? Is the arm of mercy ſhorter or weaker than that of juſtice? Or does our God, as was fabled of the heathen Jupiter, diſtribute his mercies out of a gaugeable tun, which when empty, he muſt ſtop at the next man ſtanding cloſe to him who laſt received invaluable treaſures therefrom? No, but juſtice is a debt, therefore requires an exact apportionment to the deſert of every particular perſon: whereas mercy is matter of meer favour, therefore ſubject to no rules; for God may extend his favours as far as he pleaſes and ſtop where he pleaſes, and conſequently by the interpoſition of his free mercy, may throw an immeaſurable gap between perſons whom juſtice would have treated nearly alike. I ſhall not deny he may do ſo, for who can hinder him? but if it be inferred from thence alone, that he does do ſo, this is building upon hypotheſis; for what may be, may as well not be: nor have we reaſon to conclude for either branch of the disjunction unleſs we can find ſomething in

our

our idea of the Attributes to caſt the balance between two things equally poſſible.

Therefore nothing can be gathered from what he may do, until it be known in what ſence the word is underſtood: for it has been ſhown in Chap. XXVI. that May, Can and Poſſible, are equivocal terms, as relating either to power or contingency. In the former ſence it is certain God may ſhow mercy to whom he will, and withold it from whom he will. This nobody doubts: for we are all in his hands, and he has full right and authority to deal with us as he pleaſes. But ſo he may diſtribute juſtice too without rule or meaſure: for who ſhall withſtand his power? what reſtraint or obligation hangs over him? or who ſhall ſay to him, Why doſt thou this? If then we ſay he cannot deal unjuſtly by his creatures, we found the aſſertion upon our idea of his nature, inclining him to govern invariably with perfect righteouſneſs; and what we ſay, amounts to no more than an aſſurance that he never will.

Now let us apply the expreſſion the ſame way to mercy, and we ſhall find it hard to comprehend that he may ſhow infinite mercy to whom he pleaſes, and withold every ſpark of it from whom he pleaſes, without any other rule or reaſon than his own meer pleaſure. For mercy is as much in his nature

as juſtice, nor is one leſs infinite than the other is perfect: neither does he proceed arbitrarily in either, but both are guided by the rules of infinite wiſdom. Therefore mercy never tires in diſpenſing her inexhauſtible treaſures, nor ever ſtops when come to a certain point of delinquency, until wiſdom repreſents that the offender could not be ſpared without damage to the creation: and then it would be miſchief, not mercy, to paſs the line of ſeparation. Thus we find the ſinner who wants the juſt meaſure of righteouſneſs or ſaving faith, is doomed to everlaſting flames, while another but little better is rewarded with everlaſting bliſs: not becauſe God has not mercy enough to ſave both, but becauſe it is expedient that one ſhould periſh for the benefit of the creation.

Can we then perſuade ourſelves that the common father of all ſhould ſo ſeverely ſacrifice ſome of his children to the good of the reſt, without reſerving to himſelf a time wherein his mercy may make a compenſation? Or what rule of reaſon will permit that the heavieſt burthens of public ſervice ſhould lie for ever upon the ſame perſons? Nor does there want an argument that they do not, taken from facts within the reach of our obſervation; which are, the daily departure of perſons dying in their ſins. For where

where any collection or number receive a continual encrease, it is a presumptive evidence of their having continually a proportionable discharge. To what purpose then are fresh additions made, unless to supply fresh vacancies, where the number is already full? as we must conclude it always to have been ever since there were creatures existent. For can we conceive that God would permit the requisite examples of suffering ever to be wanting in the universe? or that he will permit them ever to abound more than wanting? or what ground have we to imagine a greater quantity of evil necessary now than was two thousand years ago? What then shall we say to those countless multitudes that your pious Christians assert have been cast into everlasting flames in that time? Have they all perished gratis, without any benefit to the world, which might have done as well without their punishment, having [illegible] of it before? Is it not more natural to conclude they go to occupy the places of others, who from time to time have obtained their deliverance? Thus we see the doctrine of endless punishment has no foundation in human reason, and we must have recourse to the inspired writings for proofs to support it. If such proofs are here to be found, which I shall offer some reasons to question.

4. If I were to imitate ſome of our profound doctors, who run to the original text for a word wherein they may find a ſence unthought of before, to ſupport their particular opinions: I might inſiſt that the term tranſlated Everlaſting, ought to be preſerved untranſlated, as a kind of technical term, and called Aionian. I might then lay down that as the age of man contains that ſpace of time paſſing between his birth and his death, ſo the Aion, or greater age, contains the whole length of his journey through matter. Therefore Aionian puniſhment is a ſtate of ſuffering to laſt from his death until he ſhall get wholly clear of all corporeal organization. I might obſerve likewiſe it is remarkable that in ſpeaking of God, whoſe eternity every body muſt allow to be abſolute, it is ſaid that he ſhall endure, not ſimply to the Aion, that is, for ever, but to the Aion of Aions, that is, for ever and ever: which marks a viſible difference between the duration of puniſhment and abſolute eternity.

But I am not fond of this kind of argumentation, which is better calculated to ſtop an adverſary's mouth than to convince him. I hold it more expedient to conſider fairly what are the ideas intended to be conveyed by the expreſſions in the text. Now we are told the Goſpel was preached to the poor, that

that is, the ignorant and unrefined, therefore is beſt expounded in the ſence wherein ſuch would naturally underſtand it: nor are we warranted to look for ſcholaſtic or philoſophical notions in anything contained there. Mankind in the earlieſt ages, of which we know little more than what ſtands recorded in the books of Moſes, ſeem to have had no notion of anything beyond this world: therefore the rewards and puniſhments propoſed to them were all of the temporal kind, or at moſt ſuch as related to their poſterity and the remembrance of their names here upon earth. I ſhall not deny that ſome thinking perſons did very early entertain an opinion of a life to come, and by degrees introduced it among the vulgar. But in the latter at leaſt it amounted to no more than a perſuaſion that the ſoul ſhould ſurvive the body, without conſidering for how long continuance, yet without ſetting any limitation to it or thinking of anything beyond; wherefore they applied to it the epithet Everlaſting. And ſo in common diſcourſe we ſpeak of an immenſe deſart, a boundleſs ocean, an endleſs proſpect; becauſe neither the eye nor the imagination can find an end: and we talk of a man purchaſing an eſtate to him and his heirs for ever; not that we believe the earth, or the lands [redacted]

tioned, eternal, but becauſe no limitation is ſet to the poſſeſſion.

In theſe caſes we are ſomething like thoſe Indians of whom it is ſaid they can count no further than twenty; and for all higher numbers point to the hairs of their head: ſo if you were to tell them of a flock of a hundred ſheep, you can only point to the hairs: if of a thouſand, 'tis the ſame; or if you talk of the immenſity of ſpace or infinitude of time, ſtill you can do no more than refer to the hairs. In like manner we uſe the term For ever to expreſs every length of time whereto we ſet no meaſure, nor conſider anything beyond. Nor is it denied the Scripture ſometimes employs this term for durations which cannot be ſuppoſed endleſs, and if it employs the ſame for ſuch as are ſo, it is becauſe none other of higher import was to be found in common language: therefore this being an equivocal term, requires ſomething elſe to determine which way it is to be underſtood upon every particular occaſion.

It has been alledged indeed that there is this ſomething elſe: becauſe the continuance of puniſhment is expreſſed in the ſame tenour of language with that of the reward promiſed the righteous, which every body allows to be endleſs. But why every body ſhould allow this, I do not know; unleſs for want of diſtinguiſhing

guiſhing that the bleſſings of God are of two ſorts: thoſe which are given as a reward of obedience, and thoſe which are given of his pure unmerited bounty, without regard to anything paſt, but flowing directly from infinite goodneſs. The bliſs of the final ſtate I have all along ſuppoſed eternal in the utmoſt extent of the word: which it may well be, notwithſtanding a few excurſions into mortality, that make little gaps, or rather imperceptible crevices in it, but do not limit its duration. Juſt as if a man were promiſed immortality and perpetual happineſs here upon earth, he would not think it a falſification of the prophecy that he loſt a part of every night in ſleep, or paſſed an uneaſy day once in twenty years. Now this bliſs is the free gift and ſole effect of bounty, extending to all alike, and requiring none other qualification than the capacity of receiving it. But 'tis the Aionian life and Aionian death, to continue during the journey through matter, that makes the conditions of men different, and depends upon their behaviour here below. Therefore this Aionian difference of conditions was all needfull to be inculcated for ſerving the purpoſes of Religion and morality: and this the vulgar would naturally underſtand of an unlimited duration, the utmoſt extent of their ideas,

they would not think of looking for anything further.

For the diſtinction between a time whereto the thought can ſet no bounds and an abſolute eternity, between the words Indefinite and Infinite, attempted in our Chapter on the diviſibility of matter, were the refinements of modern ages; wherein men have dived deeper into the abyſs of thought than their forefathers could do, by improving upon their labours. Now it would have done miſchief to the vulgar to have perplexed them with theſe ſubtilties, which therefore are left open to the deciſion of human reaſon: nor would it have done ſervice to any body to have decided them, becauſe reaſon, with all her refinements, cannot leſſen the diſcouragement there lies againſt evil doing. As I ſhall now endeavour to manifeſt, by reſuming the main purpoſe of this Chapter, from which I have hitherto digreſſed.

5. Whoever will take pains in practiſing the method recommended at the cloſe of the laſt Chapter, by figuring to himſelf a ſituation he ſhould moſt vehemently diſlike; whether of ſcorching flames, cruel ſcourgings, ſlaviſh drudgeries, ghaſtly ſpectres, dreadfull caſualties, inward pains, nauſeous diſeaſes, intolerable thirſts, cutting affronts, contemptuous inſults, inceſſant vexations, or whatever elſe he

he finds moſt ſhocking to his thought, and from thence taking his eſtimation of future puniſhments, which however different in kind, we have given reaſons to ſhow, will exceed them in degree; may preſently ſee that nothing in this world can make it worth his while to incur them. For let him compute all the pleaſures of vice and folly that the longeſt life, with the moſt uninterrupted ſucceſs, and his moſt ſanguine hopes can promiſe him, and he will find the utmoſt amount of them immeaſurably outweighed by an extremity of torment, tho' it were to laſt no longer than for a twelvemonth: and yet he muſt not expect to come off for ſo ſhort a reckoning.

If he flatter himſelf that he ſhall become familiarized to his ſufferings by long endurance until they loſe their anguiſh, becauſe the like ſometimes happens here; this is a vain imagination which he has no ground to build upon. Pain and labour abate of their grievouſneſs here, becauſe our bodily organs abate of their ſenſibility by frequent uſe, as our fleſh becomes callous by continual preſſing: but we do not find the like relief in diſorders of the mind, unleſs thoſe whereon the body has an immediate influence. Time may cure them by introducing other habits giving imagination a contrary turn, but can never

never cure an old habit meerly by wearing it out. Boys begin to want money as ſoon as they know the uſe of it, and this want grows with their years; ſo that covetouſneſs is obſerved to be the predominant vice of old age. Thoſe who have given way to anger and reſentment in their youth, grow more touchy and revengefull the longer they live. And tho' carnal concupiſcence take riſe from the body, yet when the infection has been ſuffered to catch ſtrong hold on the mental organization, it continues to plague the old lecher with the cravings and filthineſs of debauchery, after he is paſt all capacity of the pleaſures. Inſomuch that Plato and many others have ſuppoſed the puniſhment of the wicked to conſiſt of ſuch inſatiable deſires as cannot find gratification for want of the corporeal inſtruments left behind. However this be, we have no reaſon, from any thing within our own experience, but to think that whatever pains or inconveniences ariſe from a diſorder or infirmity in our mental organization, when disjoined from the body, ſhall continue ſo long as the mind continues in that Aion, or form of Being, and ſo ſhall be properly an Aionian puniſhment.

6. How long this continuance may be, there is nobody can undertake to determine: for we have no light from the Attributes, becauſe

cauſe we know not what limitation muſt be ſet to evil to bring it conſiſtent with infinite goodneſs. It ſeems not unlikely, what ſome have imagined before, that the mind does not get clear of all corporeal mixture ever the ſooner for obtaining a quick diſcharge from her preſent habitation: but that there is a certain length of paſſage aſſigned her thro' matter. Wherefore, as a man who is to perform a journey in a certain time, if he makes his firſt ſtage very ſhort, muſt travel ſo many more miles the next: ſo if ſhe ſtays but little while in this life, ſhe muſt abide ſo much the longer in that which is to follow, that the ſum of both added together may compleat the appointed length. Upon this ſuppoſition we muſt conclude that every man's Aion exceeds the difference between the age at which he died, and that of the oldeſt man who ever lived: I ſay, exceeds, becauſe there muſt have been an Aion reſerved for the longeſt liver, both of the righteous and of the wicked, wherein they might receive the reſpective recompenſe of their deeds. Now if we can take Moſes's word, the human body was built originally to ſtand near a thouſand years: ſo that all the deaths appearing upon our preſent bills of mortality muſt be counted haſty and premature; nor can we, ſuch men as live in

theſe degenerate days, expect a ſhorter Aion than that ſpace of time.

But ſince 'tis not the faſhion with every body to take Moſes's word, let us argue with them, by parity of reaſon, from facts obvious to their experience, whoſe word it may be hoped they will take. The acorn lies ripening in the tree a part only of the ſummer, but the oak to grow from thence may laſt for ages. The embrio animal grows in the dam a few weeks or a few months, but comes from thence to live for years. The child is formed and faſhioned in three quarters of a year, but when born may hold out to fourſcore or a hundred. Thus we ſee that ſtate, whether of animal or vegetative life, which nature employs as the introduction to another, bears a ſmall proportion to the date of that whereto it is introductory. But it has been ſhown upon ſeveral former occaſions, that our preſent life is preparatory to the next; and that the mental organization, vulgarly called the rational ſoul, lies like a little fœtus within us, continually forming and faſhioning by our behaviour and the occurrencies befalling us here: from whence it may be preſumed that all this proviſion is not made for effects of a ſhort continuance, but the ſtate for which we are preparing ſhall exceed our preſent in as high proportion as our date of life, barring acci-

dents,

dents, would have exceeded our time of geſtation in the womb: which will extend the Aion far beyond the thouſand years before aſſumed.

7. Let us ſuppoſe then we could know for certain that the duration of future puniſhment were preciſely one thouſand years: what encouragement could this give to the ſinner? Is not this length far greater than that of any enjoyment he can expect to get by ſinning? Let him conſider what it is to paſs a day, a week, a month, in exquiſite tortures, and he will ſoon find a leſs time than that we have ſpecified ſufficient to diſcourage him effectually from running the hazard. Suppoſe a wicked man talked to by the Parſon of the pariſh, who terrifies him with the dread of everlaſting flames, into the reſolution of amendment. You come in afterwards and bid him not mind the parſon, for you know better than all of them put together, and can aſſure him there is no ſuch thing as everlaſting flames. Ay! ſays the man, I am heartily glad of that, for then I may take my pleaſure without fear of an after-reckoning. No, no, you ſay, I cannot engage for ſo much neither: you muſt expect to ſmart, but 'twill be but for a while, only a thouſand years and all will be well again. What comfort could this give him? Muſt it not rather damp his ſpirits,

and the naming so vast a length, encrease his terrors more than the limitation to that term abate them?

For both choice and evidence have their certain weight to render them compleat: while below this pitch, you may encrease them by adding to the weights; but when once arrived at it, all further addition is superfluous. For in moral arithmetic, as observed before under the article of pleasure, the same rules do not hold good as in the common; nor does two and two always make four. If I hear an unlikely fact related by somebody I know little of; I shall not heed him much: if another confirms what he said, I may begin to doubt: two or three more agreeing in the same story may make me think it probable: but if twenty persons of approved honour and veracity asserted it upon their own knowledge, I should give an unreserved assent; nor could I do more tho' a hundred of the same character were to come in. So were a man offered a long life of pleasure for a month's future sufferings, perhaps he might be stout enough to accept the condition: were they encreased to a year, he might hesitate: but were they multiplied to a thousand years, he could not delay his choice a moment, if he had any consideration at all. Where demonstration

ſtration will not convince, nor things beyond all compariſon determine the choice, it proves an inſenſibility in the mind which no further outward application can cure. If thoſe who hear not Moſes and the Prophets would not believe tho' one roſe from the dead; neither would he that is not touched with a thouſand years of ſevereſt puniſhment, be moved with an eternity. For it is plain the preſent wholly engroſſes his imagination: he has no regard for the future: and you may as well make a blind man ſee by lighting up more candles, or a mortified limb, that has utterly loſt its ſenſation, feel by laying on more ſtripes, as affect him by any future ſufferings whatſoever.

Therefore ſince a mind that has any feeling of futurity will be filled with as much terror by the length above ſpecified as it is capable of receiving, you cannot leſſen the diſcouragement by paring off what lies beyond: and one that has no ſenſe of any thing further than this preſent life, will not be affected by all you can ſay concerning an Hereafter; ſo you cannot leſſen the diſcouragement where there was none. Beſides, for a man to pretend he ſhould have paid a due regard to his future ſtate if I had not perſuaded him it was finite, would be contradicting himſelf in the ſame breath: for why do[illegible] nothing

of

of a limited term, unleſs becauſe he conceives it fifty or threeſcore years diſtant? How abſurd then is it to tell me he ſets no value upon a reverſion after threeſcore years, yet ſhould value one extremely after a thouſand years? He that makes this excuſe either is not in earneſt or deceives himſelf egregiouſly, and only catches hold of a ſpecious argument to cover his thorough attachment to preſent pleaſures.

8. Nevertheleſs if any think a longer duration will work more upon mens minds, let them pleaſe to remember that tho' I have offered conſiderations to make it probable the puniſhment will continue ſo long, I have not offered a ſingle one to prove it will continue no longer. It may be rather inferred from the ſecond argument I have employed, drawn from the analogy of ſeeds and embrios, that the length ought to be extended much further: for if you fix the life of man at ſeventy years, that term will be the mean proportion between the time of his geſtation in the womb, and his Aion; then ſeek that proportion by the rule of Three, and you will find that as nine months are to ſeventy years, ſo are ſeventy years to ſix thouſand five hundred thirty-three years and four months. But I do not pretend to aſcertain this matter by arithmetical calculations, nor indeed to ſet any certain limitation whatever thereto: all I can

ſay

ſay with aſſurance is this, that it will be for ſo long as to anſwer the purpoſe intended by it: if a thouſand years will not do, it ſhall be for ten thouſand: if ten thouſand will not do, it ſhall be for a hundred thouſand. Be ſure the unrepenting ſinner ſhall ſuffer long enough to make it ſtrikingly clear to the dulleſt apprehenſion and moſt ſtony heart, that he has made a fooliſh and a fatal bargain. And as it may be preſumed one intention is to overcome his obduracy, if ever he ſhall be permitted to deliver himſelf, it muſt be by the ſame ſelf-denials by which he might have eſcaped his puniſhment; therefore he had better practiſe them voluntarily now, than ſtay till compelled to it by extremity of tortures.

After all that has been ſuggeſted, if any conſiderate perſon ſhould happen to come into my notion upon this article, I think he could not be induced thereby to become a whit the leſs carefull of his future concerns: and for the inconſiderate, they are not likely to meddle with my ſpeculations. But if any of them ſhould be hurt, it may be attributed to the common practice of expatiating with all the powers of Oratory upon the word Eternal; which carries a tacit implication, that if puniſhment were not eternal, it would not be worth minding. This ſeems to be enuring men never to ſtir unleſs upon the ſtrong-

eſt inducement: perhaps it might be more expedient to bring them into a habit of anſwering the gentleſt call of judgement. It has been remarked that a trader never grows rich who deſpiſes little gains: and it might as juſtly be ſaid, that a man never grows happy or prudent who deſpiſes little advantages, altho' large enough to be viſible. The mind has been often compared to a fine balance, and we know the excellence of a balance lies in its turning with a hair; ſo the excellence of judgement lies in diſcerning the minuteſt difference; and the excellence of diſpoſition, in purſuing meaſures readily upon view of the ſlighteſt preference.

Yet every innovation, even of a word, in the received form of doctrine, tho' not affecting the main purpoſe of Religion, that of making men better, is looked upon as dangerous; and I cannot help owning, with reaſon. Becauſe the bulk of mankind, too lazy to think for themſelves, take what they do take, upon the credit of their teachers: and if they find that credit ſhaken in any ſingle inſtance, very haſtily infer that every thing elſe taught them was meer invention or miſtake. Therefore to avoid giving a handle whereby ſuch pernicious conſequence might be drawn, I ſhall proceed to make out, that the puniſhments of a future life may ſtill be eternal. I doubt not this

this will be thought a contradiction to that equality I have been labouring to eſtabliſh: but before men pronounce things contradictory, let them be ſure they have a clear and adequate notion of the terms whereby they are expreſſed.

9. What elſe is eternity beſides an infinite length of time? and this we may think we have a clear apprehenſion of becauſe we know what we ſay when we uſe the epithet Infinite: but the conſequence does not follow, for tho' we have a clear idea of infinity, we have none of an infinite quantity. I need not be at the pains to prove this paradox too, Mr. Locke having done it before me: for he tells us the idea of infinity is that of being able to add perpetually without ever coming to an end. So that the infinitude of a quantity is its exceeding all our methods of computation, a circumſtance we can eaſily comprehend belonging to it: but what does ſo exceed them cannot be the object of our comprehenſion, becauſe whatever number we can clearly conceive, we might expreſs exactly by figures; therefore it is no rule that there can be nothing beyond what is infinite, nor that all infinites muſt be equal. To the Indians mentioned ſome time ago, who could count no further than twenty, number twenty one muſt be infinite, ſo muſt fifty, ſo muſt a hundred;

and

and a thouſand: yet we who can count further, know theſe are different numbers, which may be ſubſtracted from one another and ſtill leave what to thoſe ſavages ſhall remain infinite, expreſſible only by the hairs of their head. Much the ſame it is with ourſelves, we can run prodigious lengths with our millions and billions and trillions, but we cannot run on for ever: our powers of numeration have their certain bounds, which whatever ſurpaſſes, ſo as that we might add and add without end yet without ever reaching it, we call infinite; nor have we any other name for all quantities ſurpaſſing our utmoſt numeration. So becauſe we call them all by one name, we ſuppoſe them all the ſame thing. Yet there may be great varieties among them, and they may contain one another many times over without our being able to find a difference between them: for they rank under the claſs of incomprehenſibles, concerning which we can form no clear nor adequate conception.

But I am gotten into the wilds of abſtraction, and ſhall be better underſtood by recurring to caſes where we may have ſenſible objects to aſſiſt us. Draw two lines acroſs one another at right angles; deſcribe circles, as many as you pleaſe, upon the point of interſection, whoſe centers lie behind each other upon one of the lines; then turn the central

foot

foot of your compaſs to the oppoſite ſide of the ſame line, and draw the like number of circles reſpectively equal to the former, all touching in the ſame point. Now mathematicians will tell you that the external angles between all the circles, and thoſe made by the tranſverſe line with them all, are infinitely ſmall: that the ſaid tranſverſe or tangential line cuts the angle between each pair of equal circles into two halves; and the angle between the two leaſt circles contains all the reſt as parts of a whole. So you ſee here is one infinite which contains many others within it, each of them divifible into two infinites a piece.

Lay down a ſhilling upon the table, and there lies an infinite ſpace directly over it; for all the Solar and Stellar vortices, all the vaſt expanſe containing the viſible univerſe, if ſqueezed into the diameter of the ſhilling, would not fill up the cylinder; they could raiſe it only to a determinate height computable by the rules of arithmetic. Place another ſhilling cloſe to the former, and there ſtands the like infinite ſpace over that too. Draw a line acroſs the two ſhillings thro' their point of contact, and produce it in imagination as far as you can to the right hand; as it paſſes along it will continually cut ſuperficies capable of containing other ſhillings, each having the like cylinder over it: but as you can never

never find an end of your line, you muſt conclude there runs an infinite row of columns on the right ſide of your ſhillings. So here we have the ſquare of infinitude, that is, an infinite number of infinite ſpaces. You may likewiſe imagine another row running ſide by ſide beyond the former, another beyond that, and ſo on without limitation: which gives you an infinite number of rows, or the cube of infinitude. Then we may conſider that there hangs the like cylinder under each ſhilling as riſes above it; that the line might be produced on the left hand as well as on the right; and rows run along on the hither ſide of the firſt row as endleſsly as on the further ſide: ſo that we have double infinites, quadruple ſquares, and octuple cubes of infinitude; and all theſe together compoſe the immenſity of ſpace, which we can expreſs by no higher term than ſtill to call it infinite.

With reſpect to infinite time, or eternity, we cannot find ſquares and cubes there; yet every common eye may ſee that it conſiſts of two eternities, that which is paſt and that which is ſtill to come: the one continually receiving addition, yet without encreaſe of quantity, the other continually periſhing, yet without diminution, by the ſucceſſive elapſe of years and ages. This cannot happen in infinite periods, where the part behind conſider-

ly gathers ground in proportion upon the part before: Methuſaleh at the age of thirty, was ten years older and had ten leſs to live than at the age of twenty: but who will ſay God is older now than in the beginning, when the earth was without form and void? or that either he, or the human ſoul, has leſs time to exiſt now, than at the inſtant when he called her forth into Being?

Thus we ſee, that infinites elude all our rules of arithmetic: if we add, multiply, ſquare or cube, we cannot encreaſe them: if we ſubſtract, divide, extract the ſquare or cube root, we cannot diminiſh them. Whatever we do, we can make no change from what they were before; for in every proceſs where one quantity is infinite, what other ſoever we work it with, ſtill the ſum, remainder, product and quotient will always be infinite. But the Divine mathematician proceeds not by our arithmetic: he wants not comprehenſion to graſp the immenſity of ſpace, nor line of intelligence to meaſure the abyſs of eternity. He ſees diſtinctly what varieties of infinites lie contained within one another, and what proportion each bears to other. Nor can we take upon us to deny that he may know there have been many eternities already paſt, and many ſtill reſerved in the boſom of futurity: whereof he may aſſign one for the

bution of rewards and punishments, leaving ample room beyond for restoring equality by provisions made to bring the balance even between his particular creatures. If we cannot comprehend this, tell me what there is we can comprehend upon the article of infinites; and then I shall admit our non-comprehension a proof of the thing not being so.

And yet I think we may gather some illustration of this matter from a case put upon the two eternities whereof we have an idea. Nobody can deny that God has had the power of creating from everlasting, nor that, whatever has been done, he might have exercised that power from everlasting: therefore there might have been creatures who had existed eternally. Suppose then there were two men, one of whom had passed an eternity in a certain degree of uneasiness, the other in an equal degree of enjoyment; and both were called to judgement to show cause why there should not be a change of conditions between them, to be never altered again. I doubt not the former would be ready enough to alledge the equity of the exchange; for that it was but reasonable that he who had been holden from all eternity in a state worse than non-entity, should be allotted a like continuance in a state as much better: and if he prevailed, would think himself made amends for the unbegin-

ning

ing ſuffering he had endured, by the endleſs enjoyment he expected. Hence it appears an idea may be framed in ſpeculation, of the weights hanging eternally on one ſide, yet the balance being brought even, and an equality ſubſiſting if computed throughout the whole extent of exiſtence.

10. Yet whatever limits be really ſet to the duration of future puniſhment, it will be the ſame to the ſinner at his entrance upon it as if there were none: for if not endleſs it will be hopeleſs. For the future can affect us no otherwiſe than by our knowledge or idea of it: whatever good or evil fortune is to befal me to-morrow, whatever end ſhall then be put to my pleaſures or afflictions, will give me neither joy nor ſorrow while I have no ſuſpicion of it. A man caſt into a loathſome dungeon, or put on board a ſhip to be ſent into baniſhment, while lamenting that he ſhall never ſee the light again, or his friends and country again, can receive no comfort from the Prince having reſolved to revoke his doom, unleſs he be told it. In like manner when the wicked lies engulpht in the dreadful abyſs of darkneſs, what conſolation can he receive from a deliverance, however near, whereof he can have no knowledge? Does he think to retain his preſent ſanguine expectations? They ſprung from his partiality to ſenſual pleaſures,

flattering

bution of rewar
ample room beyo
provisions made to
tween his particul
comprehend this,
can comprehend up
and then I shall adm
a proof of the thing

And yet I think
tration of this matt
two eternities wh
body can deny tha
creating from ever
has been done, h
power from everl
have been creatu
Suppose then th
whom had passed
gree of uneasiness
of enjoyment; an
ment to show cau
a change of condi
never altered agai
would be ready an
of the exchange; f
able that he who ha
ternity in a state wor
be allotted a like en
much better: and if
think himself made an

d them upon ſolid and conſiſtent reaſon:
will then remain unſhaken in all changes
uation and ſtand the teſt of adverſity, to
r comfort when we need it moſt. Where-
we flatter ourſelves with an injudicious
l-grounded idea of juſtice and goodneſs
ıdulgence, becauſe it ſuits our preſent
nience, we ſhall ſee it wreſted out of our
ſome time or other, and then that will
ıe an object of horror and deſpondency,
we uſed to look upon as our protection
cence to take our pleaſures without

As I ſhould be very ſorry to have my
tions do hurt to any body, I ſhall not
myſelf with removing objections a-
hem, but likewiſe endeavour to guard
every vain imagination that I can con-
ight ariſe in mens minds from any
efore offered, and might have a bad
e upon their conduct. Perhaps ſome
ready to catch hold of any pretence
y them in following their own incli-
may alledge, that ſince the periods
everal ſtages contained in them are
ine appointment, they need not
ſelves to be ful of their con-
wever th they muſt run
d the cannot alter
ited Will of Hea-
ven.

H

flattering him with the belief of whatever might prove an encouragement to follow them: therefore muſt neceſſarily vaniſh together with the root whereout they grew. Or even ſuppoſing them founded on cleareſt and calmeſt reaſonings, is he ſure of carrying with him his preſent ideas or the remembrance of any thing he has diſcovered here? Or what room will there be for clear and calm reaſoning in the midſt of tortures? Or will not the Devils and his companions in miſery, have cunning enough to frame crafty ſophiſms, that ſhall overthrow all his reaſonings, and confound his underſtanding? If they ſee ſouls delivered every day, be ſure, they will let him know nothing of the matter: but urge all their topics, and uſe all their artifices to aggravate his deſpair. And as men are here too apt to murmur againſt God and charge him fooliſhly, when things go very much amiſs with them: ſo the reprobate, who as ſuch muſt have a perverſe turn of mind, when fallen under the weight of divine vengeance, will behold in God a cruel oppreſſor, a furious irreſiſtible monſter, having no ſpark of mercy in his nature, and as incapable of relenting as time is of running backwards.

And here we may obſerve by the way, of how great importance it is to form our notions of the divine Attributes aright, and

found

found them upon ſolid and conſiſtent reaſon; they will then remain unſhaken in all changes of ſituation and ſtand the teſt of adverſity, to be our comfort when we need it moſt. Whereas if we flatter ourſelves with an injudicious and ill-grounded idea of juſtice and goodneſs and indulgence, becauſe it ſuits our preſent convenience, we ſhall ſee it wreſted out of our hands ſome time or other, and then that will become an object of horror and deſpondency, which we uſed to look upon as our protection and licence to take our pleaſures without ſcruple.

11. As I ſhould be very ſorry to have my ſpeculations do hurt to any body, I ſhall not content myſelf with removing objections againſt them, but likewiſe endeavour to guard againſt every vain imagination that I can conceive might ariſe in mens minds from any thing before offered, and might have a bad influence upon their conduct. Perhaps ſome who are ready to catch hold of any pretence to juſtify them in following their own inclinations, may alledge, that ſince the periods and the ſeveral ſtages contained in them are fixed by divine appointment, they need not trouble themſelves to be careful of their conduct: for whatever they do, they muſt run the courſe aſſigned them, and cannot alter what has been appointed by the Will of Hea-

ven. Or poſſibly ſome, too ſelfiſhly righteous, may be backward in reclaiming others whom they ſee travelling the road of deſtruction, becauſe ſince there are ſuffering ſtates which muſt be borne by ſomebody, they will be glad to find others ready to undertake them, as rendering their own chance of eſcaping the ſtronger. But there would be no room for theſe ſurmizes, if it were remembered that I have all along diſclaimed a fatality, compulſorily and unalterably fixing events dependent upon human agency: and that there being a ſecret Will makes no alteration in the juſtneſs and expedience of our meaſures; that Will being conſtantly fulfilled by the free choice of our own Wills in matters lying under our power, which remain as much the proper object of our deliberation and induſtry as if there were no fore-knowledge or preappointment concerning them.

Yet the ideas of precauſation and fatality, of certainty and neceſſity, are ſo ſtrongly rivetted together in mens minds by cuſtom, that is is not eaſy to keep them aſunder, when once disjoined, without repeated efforts and placing things in various lights, one of which may chance to ſucceed where the others have failed. Wherefore it may not be amiſs to make one more attempt for breaking the aſſociation: tho' what I have to offer

ſer will be little elſe in ſubſtance than what I have offered before. The appointment of all events, both great and ſmall, being made no otherwiſe than by the proviſion of adequate cauſes to bring them forth, the moſt important and momentous will fall under the ſame rules with the moſt familiar and trifling. Let us conſider then how the caſe ſtands with reſpect to the common tranſactions of life. If I have friends to dine with me to-morrow, and have ſettled my bill of fare of things I know are to be had in the houſe or the yard or the market; I may look upon the appearance of the diſhes upon my table as a certain event comprized in the liſt of appointments, becauſe I know all the cauſes are ready at hand requiſite to produce it: and it was certain ſeven years ago, tho' I did not know it then, nor could any body have foretold it. Nevertheleſs how is it unalterable, but that how ſtrongly ſoever I have reſolved to have a turkey, it is ſtill in my power to exchange it for a gooſe? What compulſion was I under either in making my determination or in keeping it? Wherein does it render my cares unneceſſary in giving orders to my ſervants for providing and preparing the meats? Or what alteration does the opinion of a pre-appointment make, ſo much as of a lettuce in the ſallad or a garniſh upon the diſh?

Perhaps I deſign to buy a horſe for my riding, but have not any particular one in my eye: I know there are enow to be had in town, and the jockeys will cheat one egregiouſly: yet I am reſolved to deal with them as well as I can. This too ſtands upon the roll of appointments, for there are cauſes in being, dependent in a chain upon the operations of the Firſt, which will direct me to one certain purchaſe: though I know not what will be the iſſue, yet I know it will depend partly upon my own management. Therefore what have I elſe to do than take the beſt care and get the beſt advice I can in the matter? And what could I do better if all things lay under the diſpoſal of Chance, and there were neither order nor government in the univerſe?

So every man's future ſtate, whether of reward or puniſhment, depends upon his tenour of behaviour in life, and the proviſion of cauſes influencing him to hold it. He cannot indeed foreſee the iſſue with abſolute certainty, becauſe he cannot certainly know what trials he may be put to, nor examine all the receſſes of his own heart to ſee preciſely what degrees of ſtrength or weakneſs lie latent there: yet ſo far as he can diſcern theſe, he may riſe to a proportionable degree of aſſurance; and for what uncertainties remain, he may know that

a

a conſtant application of his judgement and vigilance and induſtry will diminiſh the hazard and add to his ſecurity. And what better could he augurate, or more effectual could he do, ſuppoſing God himſelf did not know what would become of him, or had made no appointment concerning him?

Then for the quantity of evil being aſcertained, we may argue by the like parity of reaſon between greater evils and ſmaller. All the troubles, misfortunes and diſappointments of this world, are owing to a concurrence of circumſtances and particular cauſes deriving their efficacy from the Firſt: nor when he began the chain, can we ſuppoſe him ignorant or thoughtleſs of every minute effect that would enſue from his operation, even to the falling of a ſparrow to the ground or the ſhedding of a hair upon our heads. Neither can we imagine him ſo ill a contriver as not to have provided for as many of thoſe caſualties as were neceſſary for his wiſe and gracious purpoſes, or ſo regardleſs of his creatures as to permit a ſingle one more to happen than were ſo neceſſary: for he ordains all things by number, weight and meaſure.

Therefore we muſt conclude there is a certain number of bruiſes, broken bones, fires, loſſes, vexations and other ſiniſter accidents, appointed to befal on earth. But what rule of

duct can we gather from hence, ſince we know not the number? For this belongs to the ſecret Will, which is no guide of our proceedings. Shall I fooliſhly run down a precipice, where it is a hundred to one but I fall and hurt myſelf grievouſly, becauſe all things are appointed in number, weight and meaſure? If I knew that I muſt have one tumble in my life and no more, I might as well take it now as another time: or if I knew that ſome one, and but one, out of twenty of us, muſt have a tumble, it might be thought a fit of romantic generoſity to venture my own neck to ſave the reſt. But by what rule of logic can you prove, that I ſhall hurt myſelf ever the more or leſs hereafter for my falling now? or that it ſhall anyways affect the good or bad fortune of other people?

What diſaſters hang over us from cauſes out of our power, cannot be altered by any thing we do; and what we may either bring upon ourſelves or avoid, depends upon the cauſes ſuited to produce it, which in this caſe are our own actions. Here then we have it in our option to determine what ſhall be the appointed event lying in the ſecret Will; to add or ſubſtract one among the number of diſaſters requiſite, becauſe we have the cauſes of it under command. Therefore if I can eſcape an impending danger by my care and good

good management, I ſhall look upon it as a clear gain, equally with thoſe who hold the reality and dominion of chance: for the advantage is viſible, but the damage to enſue I cannnot diſcover upon any of my principles. In like manner the future ſtates of men depend, not upon a fatality, but upon the natural cauſes, to wit, their reſpective manners of behaviour here upon earth: and the number of either ſort upon the number of perſons who ſhall chooſe either courſe of life. Therefore he that ſaves himſelf or his neighbour from deſtruction, is ſo far from hurting any body, that he does a ſignal ſervice to the univerſe; by making one fewer ſuffering ſtate requiſite therein, than there would have been had he omitted his endeavours.

12. Now to conclude this whole article of equality, I hope nobody will take offence meerly upon account of its novelty: for however novel it may be, it hurts none of the old tenets and precepts that have been employed to keep the world in order; nor leſſens the expedience of being carefull of our conduct in a ſingle point. It leaves juſtice to proceed as before in the diſtribution of reward and puniſhment according to every man's deſerts: particular care has been taken to provide againſt every notion that might be engrafted upon it, of dangerous conſequence either

to Religion or good morals: it has been applied as a perſuaſive to that humility and lowlineſs of mind, ſo ſtrongly inculcated in our ſacred writings: and as an encouragement, drawn from the fund of natural reaſon, to that unreſerved and univerſal charity which is the grand precept both of ſound philoſophy and revealed Religion.

If it be ſaid theſe doctrines are ſufficiently recommended already upon the authority of the ſacred oracles and interpretations of them by the Church, and that to lead men into another courſe of evidence would only be drawing aſide their attention from a ſurer guidance: I ſhall anſwer, that thoſe who are ſo happy as to follow ſteddily this ſure guidance, and find it ſupply all their uſes and ſatisfy every difficulty ariſing in their minds, will do well to adhere to it ſtill, without heeding my ſpeculations, as being not intended for them. But it has happened ſome how, whether by an unlucky conſtitution of mind, or a faulty education, or bad company or injudicious management of ſome preachers, or abſurdities engrafted by crafty pretenders to ſanctity, that this ſureſt guidance does not obtain the deſerved credit with every body. Is it not then acting agreeably to Chriſtian charity, and the example of him who became all things to all men if by any means he might gain ſome, to addreſs

addreſs theſe people in the way they will liſten to, and attempt leading them into the ſame points whereto their proper guide would have conducted them, tho' by a different road wherein they may be prevailed upon to travel. And if they will be pleaſed to conſider maturely what has been here ſuggeſted from experience and reaſon, together with what further their own thoughts may ſuggeſt, concerning the nature of the mind acting conſtantly upon motives, the dependence of effects upon cauſes, the univerſal government of Providence, the diſpaſſionate and impartial nature of God: it ſeems to me as if they could not fail of ſeeing a ſolid foundation for this equality, and inferring from thence that there is no intrinſic excellence of one man above another, nor other than was the gift of heaven; and that there is a mutual connection of intereſts among the ſeveral members, as well of the creation as of every community contained in it, ſo that whoever procures any good for his neighbour, does in effect procure it for himſelf.

Should I be thought in ſome places to have run on too fine-ſpun argumentations, or in others drawn too ſtrong-coloured figures, for any body's liking: let him be good natured enough to ſuppoſe, that were we to diſcourſe over this ſubject in private, and he would let

me know his taſte, I ſhould endeavour to conform myſelf thereto. But as I know not who may deign to caſt an eye upon my labours, I muſt accommodate them the beſt I can to different taſtes, and provide againſt all attacks, as well of the ſubtle miner as the open aſſailant. If he be already intimately perſuaded of the general intereſt being his own upon any other grounds whatever, he has my conſent to think no more of the equality; which I urged with none other aim than to work this perſuaſion. But whether ſelf-intereſt be the real foundation of all our rules of conduct or not, it has certainly a powerfull influence upon our motions: therefore it muſt be no ſmall ſervice to Religion and virtue, to ſet this ſpring ſo as that it may aſſiſt in their operations. This is the point I have been driving at, and if we both agree in the ſame point, we need not quarrel about the different ways whereby we arrived at it: but may go on amicably the remainder of our journey, conſulting together, as often as there may be occaſion, upon the moſt effectual methods of purſuing what we have agreed to be the trueſt road to our own intereſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

RE-ENLARGEMENT OF VIRTUE.

IN order to understand the title of this Chapter, we must recollect that of the concluding Chapter of the first Volume, which was intitled The Limitation of Virtue. I doubt not as many good people as have had patience to go thro' the argument pursued there, have condemned me for limiting her within shamefully narrow bounds: 'tis well if they were quieted for a while by the hint dropped in the two closing sections, of what I am now going to do; which is, to restore her to her ancient splendor, and [illegible] by her [illegible] [illegible] sacrifices. [illegible] her [illegible] in my [illegible]

ourſelves and of our own nature. For as it has been aſked, How can a man love God whom he hath not ſeen, if he hate his brother whom he hath ſeen: ſo by parity of reaſon it might be aſked, What can a man know of God or things inviſible, which he cannot ſee, who knows nothing of himſelf, his own manner of acting and thinking, or operation of the things wherewith he is daily converſant? For the ideas we can frame of God are none other than what we gather by analogy from ſomething found among ourſelves: and Religion being deſigned for the uſes of man, cannot be ſo explained nor applied as to ſerve his uſes, without a knowledge of human nature. The want of this reflection, I am apt to think, has given riſe to thoſe involuntary errors which have been fallen into in the expoſitions and interpretations of it: as to the deſigned perverſions, they were made by men who had ſtudied human nature but too well, and ſerved their own ends upon its weakneſſes. So that in this reſpect the children of this world, the ſons of ambition and avarice, have proved wiſer than the children of light; becauſe the latter choſe to remain always children, confining themſelves to the tenets and abſtractions taught them in their ſchools, without extending their obſervation to other things

powers: if you go to apply their rules to common uſe you will not find them anſwer: but why? Becauſe there is a roughneſs in all your inſtruments, that will hinder their operation in the manner you was taught to expect. This the profeſſor was not ignorant of, but would not burthen you with too many things at once, judging it expedient to inſtruct you thoroughly in all that his engines would perform ſuppoſing them perfectly ſmooth; and reſerve for other lectures to examine the nature of friction, and what alteration that will make according to the degrees of it. Or if he be to read upon gravitation, he will tell you that falling bodies paſs through ſpaces in their deſcent bearing a duplicate ratio to the times of their deſcending: that projectiles move in a regular parabola, forming exactly the ſame angle in their fall to the plane of the horizon, with which they were thrown up. Try the truth of this theory with a ſtone or whatever comes next to hand, and you will find it prove defective: but he will afterwards explain to you how, and in what proportion, this muſt neceſſarily happen from the reſiſtance of air.

Now the foundation which ſeemed to me the firſt to be laid, as the only ſure and ſtable one whereon the building I had taken in hand could be erected, was the knowledge of ourſelves

he has ſuch proſpect? the ſureſt road to a happy life lies through the practice of virtue.

But if I have failed in ſupporting her intereſts to the end, they need not be offended with me for an event, which rightly conſidered, terminates more in their favour than if I had ſucceeded, For there is not a word of God or another world to be found in the firſt Volume: therefore the doctrine there contained may be called the religion of an Atheiſt; at leaſt ſuch, unleſs I have been ſomewhere faulty in my deductions, as an Atheiſt might ſubſcribe to. Now had it been poſſible to have framed a complete ſyſtem of behaviour upon atheiſtical principles, it muſt have leſſened the recommendation of Theology: which might then have been regarded as a matter fit only to amuſe the curious in their leiſure hours; but of no avail in practice nor making any alteration in the duties of life.

2. Having apologized for my limitation of virtue, I may with better grace deſire the like caution may be obſerved in peruſing ſeveral other parts of my work: and that men will not be ſcandalized at any thing they find in a ſingle paſſage or a few pages detached from the reſt, nor until they ſee what uſes will be afterwards made of it. For the laws of philoſophical diſquiſitions and of ſermons are very different: the latter being addreſſed

to

to the populace, whoſe inattention ſeldom permits them to carry away more than a few ſeparate ſcraps, care muſt be taken to deliver nothing that is not perfectly innocent to the tendereſt digeſtion. The preacher muſt not do like our phyſicians, who often mingle antimony, mercury, ſolanum, opium and other poiſonous drugs in their preſcriptions: becauſe mankind is ſo perverſe, they will be ſure to pick up the poiſon and leave the correcting ingredients behind; if not to ſwallow it, at leaſt to throw in his face, or beſpatter his character.

But the former are addreſſed to the ſtudious, who can follow a train of reaſoning throughout, and diſtinguiſh between what is aſſerted as a certain truth, or only as a neceſſary conſequence from the argument at preſent in hand. They will not be like the politely learned, reading only to ſhine in converſation: whoſe averſion to trouble makes them expect to have all difficulties cleared up in a ſingle page, or a whole ſyſtem explained while one ſits prattling over a diſh of tea. Theſe are unreaſonable expectations which I am ſure I cannot, and believe no man alive can, undertake to anſwer. Therefore muſt beg leave to except againſt the procedure of all, who ſhall cite a paſſage or two, or give an abſtract of ſome Chapter, and then with a

confident air aſk the gay circle around them, what they muſt think of that: as alſo againſt the judgement of any who ſhall paſs it without hearing me through or without having cogniſance of the cauſe whereon they pronounce.

3. Had I been witholden by the awe of theſe partial examiners and haſty judges from concluding my laſt book in the manner I did, I could not have made it ſo apparent as I think it muſt be to every one who conſiders the arguments urged there, of how neceſſary importance Religion is, not only for keeping the vulgar and the giddy in order; but likewiſe for the refined and the deep-thinking. The glittering hopes and formidable terrors of another life might ſtill have been thought uſeful to play off as engines upon thoſe who conſulted only their paſſions and had no further concern than for preſent pleaſures: but wholly needleſs for ſuch as had diſcernment enough to ſee that a decent and orderly behaviour was the proper way to attain ſerenity of mind, health of body, proſperity and ſecurity among mankind.

Nor indeed can it be denied there have been thoſe who have paſſed through life very comfortably and even with applauſe, without looking to any thing beyond. Epicurus, the grand apoſtle of infidelity, ſtands recorded in hiſtory

hiſtory for his exemplary ſobriety and friendlineſs. Atticus appears to have been the moſt prudent man among the Romans in his time, and to have poſſeſſed a large ſhare even of Chriſtian charity, doing ſervice to all without diſtinction or mixture of party zeal, which then ran at the higheſt. And for the politicians of ancient days, many of whom proved excellent legiſlators and governors, 'tis pretty certain they did not believe in their country religion, nor does it appear what other religion or philoſophy moſt of them had.

But we cannot conclude upon the tendency of principles from the practice of ſingle perſons; for no man can wrap himſelf up ſo entirely in his own notions, as not to take a tincture from others among whom he converſes. For having from his childhood been uſed to hear the virtues conſtantly ſpoken of with honour, he will inſenſibly imbibe an eſteem of them without knowing why: for though I cannot allow them innate, they are perhaps generally the growth of cuſtom, our ſecond nature. But were there a nation of Atheiſts, I apprehend they could not flouriſh long: for tho' they might find it expedient to bring up their children in ſentiments of honour and probity, yet the thinking perſons among them would quickly ſee ſo far into

human nature as to diſcover, that each man's own happineſs is the proper foundation whereon all his ſchemes of conduct are to be ultimately placed; that honour, juſtice, public ſpirit, benevolence and the like, are but props employed to ſtrengthen the ſuperſtructure, where the viſible connection with its original baſis is wanting; that the fame of their names, after themſelves are fallen into annihilation, is no object deſerving their regard. Therefore upon finding themſelves approach near their end, when by their long experience they are become moſt capable of contriving for the public, they will be moſt careleſs of her intereſts. Nay 'tis well if they ſtay ſo long before they find occaſions happen, wherein they will perſuade themſelves they may ſerve their private ends without ever being diſcovered, tho' to great damage of others or of the community: in which caſes they will be ſure to prefer their own advantage, whereby things muſt ſoon run to decay and ruin. Therefore it is incumbent upon every ſtate to diſcourage the beginnings of infidelity, by all means conſiſtent with humanity and the juſt rights of civil liberty.

4. And perhaps the world might ſtill go on better, if the politicians of all countries would, as I hope thoſe of our own already do, extend their views beyond this ſcene of ſublu-

nary

nary affairs, and conſider themſelves as citizens of the univerſe. That they would not lay out their whole ſagacity upon the methods of bringing their ſchemes to bear, but beſtow a little of it upon the ſchemes themſelves; examining why they eſteem power, credit, honour, riches, deſirable at all: and if they can find none other Why than to make them happy, whether it becomes perſons of their extenſive underſtandings to think no further than the happineſs to be had during the twenty or thirty years of their continuance in ſplendour here. I do not expect they will ſuffer themſelves to be guided in their opinions by authority, nor put aſide from their aims by the general eſtimation, nor does it behove them ſo to do: but then let them be ſure they did not take any of them up upon the eſtimation of others, and thoſe not of the ſoundeſt judgement, only becauſe they were always told from their childhood by their nurſe or their mother or every body elſe they met with, how fine a thing it was to be great. For it becomes perſons of their extraordinary abilities to judge for themſelves, to caſt aſide youthfull prejudices, to draw a plan of life upon the ſolid ground of reaſon, and go to the bottom of things for their foundation.

But becauſe this is a ſcience of itſelf, which thoſe who are buſied in other occupations may want leiſure to purſue minutely; I have attempted in this ſecond Volume to trace a train of conſequences from the contemplation of nature, which any one may judge of without aid of tradition or received tenets: whereby it appears that the univerſe lies under one compleatly regulated polity; that the properties of bodies, the powers of animals, the talents of men, and all other proviſions, are made with regard to the whole; that the good of each particular depends upon the good of all; and whoever adds to the happineſs of another, adds thereby to his own. From hence it follows that honeſty is the beſt policy, and an unreſerved attachment to the public benefit, the ſureſt road to ſelf-intereſt: and ſince perſons whoſe judgement far exceeds others, have reaſon to prize the approbation of that above all popular applauſe, that the moſt noble ſacrifice they can make, and for which they may moſt deſervedly applaud themſelves is, when they have preferred the public good before their own private intereſts, or whatever they had ſet their hearts upon moſt ſtrongly.

5. Therefore now we may do ample juſtice to Regulus, whom we left under a ſentence of folly for throwing away life with all its

its enjoyments for a phantom of honour. For he may alledge that he had not a fair trial before, his principal evidence being out of the way, which having ſince collected in the courſe of this ſecond book, he moves for a rehearing. For he will now plead that it was not a fantaſtic joy in the tranſports of rectitude, nor the Stoical rhodomontade of a day ſpent in virtue containing more enjoyment than an age of bodily delights, nor his inability to bear a life of general odium and contempt, had his duty ſo required, which fixed him in his reſolution: but the prudence of the thing upon a full and calm deliberation. Becauſe he conſidered himſelf as a citizen of the univerſe, whoſe intereſts are promoted and maintained by the particular members contributing their endeavours towards encreaſing the quantity of happineſs, wherever poſſible, among others with whom they have connection and intercourſe.

He ſaw that his buſineſs lay with his fellow creatures of the ſame ſpecies, among whom a ſtrict attachment to faith and honour was the principal bulwark of order and happineſs, that a ſhamefull conduct in his preſent conflict would tend to make a general weakning of this attachment, which might introduce diſorders, rapines, violences and injuries among multitudes, to far greater amount than

his temporary tortures; that if he behaved manfully, he ſhould ſet a glorious example, which might occaſion proſperities to be gained to his country and all belonging to her, overbalancing the weight of his ſufferings, eſpecially when alleviated by the balmy conſciouſneſs of acting right. He was perſuaded likewiſe that all the good a man does, ſtands placed to his account, to be repaid him in full value when it will be moſt uſefull to him: ſo that whoever works for another, works for himſelf; and by working for numbers, earns more than he could poſſibly do by working for himſelf alone. Therefore he acted like a thrifty merchant, who ſcruples not to advance conſiderable ſums, and even to exhauſt his coffers, for gaining a large profit to the common ſtock in partnerſhip. Upon theſe allegations, ſupported by the teſtimony of far ſighted philoſophy and confirmed in the material parts by heaven-born Religion, I doubt not the jury will acquit him with flying colours, and the judge grant him a copy of the record, to make his proper uſe of, whenever he might be impeached or ſlandered hereafter.

6. Tis not unlikely here that ſomebody may put me in mind of Saint Evremont, who attempted to write a tragedy wherein Hippolitus was to be the principal character, but had

had not gone on far before he found his hero dwindled inſenſibly into a very Monſieur Saint Evremont, having the frenchman's ſentiments, making his reflections, and talking exactly in the ſame ſtrain. And then aſk me by what authority of hiſtory I prove that Regulus had any notion of the vehicles, the Aions, the balancing periods, the all-ſpace-filling Mundane ſoul, the uneſſential nature of juſtice, her generation from expedience, the purchaſe of eſtates by unavoidable or virtuous ſuffering, the general partnerſhip and univerſal bank of Ned Search. To this queſtion I ſhall reply that it is not my buſineſs to make critical remarks upon hiſtory, nor have I anything to do with the perſon of Regulus, nor to penetrate the real motives of his conduct. He ſtands with me as an ideal character, the repreſentative of all perſons who might come into his ſituation: and I was to ſhow that prudential motives of true ſelf-intereſt might be ſuggeſted to them, upon ſolid and ſubſtantial reaſons, for acting in the manner he did.

Yet it is not neceſſary that whoever practiſes the like firmneſs of behaviour, ſhould be led into it by juſt the ſame train of reaſoning as I have drawn out: for I am not ſo narrow minded as to pronounce everything no more than a ſhining ſin, which does not proceed

preciſely

preciſely from the principles appearing trueſt to me. It is enough we have ſhown the action to be prudent, and whoever performs it as being right, deſerves our approbation, tho' he may not diſcern wherein the prudence of it conſiſts. Had it indeed been undertaken out of vanity, reſentment, fondneſs of fame or any other ſelfiſh motive, though being beneficial to the univerſe, the performer might have ſhared the fruits in common with others; yet this would have been an accidental benefit, nor would he have merited reward or commendation: but muſt have ſtood in the caſe of that Roman Maſter of the horſe, who being ſtrictly enjoined to avoid a battle during his Dictator's abſence, nevertheleſs attacked the enemy and gained a compleat victory; for which the Dictator on his return gave him the honours uſually conferred on a conqueror, and then puniſhed him ſeverely for his diſobedience. But he who practiſes a ſelf-denial or goes through a painfull or perilous undertaking, which is beneficial, becauſe eſteeming it his duty, or recommended by all perſons of approved judgement, or dictated by the moral ſenſe, or upon any other of thoſe motives comprehended under the name of conſcience; does, beſides the accidental benefit he knows nothing of, being himſelf within the verge of juſtice, and the ſtream

ſtream of thoſe rewards ſhe diſtributes to well-doing.

7. For it is not to be expected that every one ſhould trace the rectitude of his meaſures quite up to the fountain head. Some perſons have not the talents, moſt conditions of life do not afford the leiſure, nor do ſome ages or countries furniſh the lights, neceſſary for that purpoſe. But God gives to every man the talents, the opportunities, the lights, ſufficient for the work whereto he calls him: it is the creatures buſineſs to anſwer the call, whether coming by the voice of his own reaſon, or the general recommendation of the judicious, or the admonitions of his moral ſenſe, or whatever other channel of conveyance his beſt judgement ſhall ſatisfy him brings it genuine. For by following ſteddily the beſt guidance he can get againſt the oppoſition of paſſion, danger, pain and affliction, he ſhall become an object of the Divine favour. And for ſuch as can diſcern what courſes of conduct are moſt extenſively beneficial, they will act prudently by leading others into them by ſuch methods as they can, whether of perſuaſion or exhortation or example or applauſe; which laſt we have already ſeen is there moſt deſervedly belonging where it may be moſt uſefully applied. For in ſo doing, they not [illegible] moral advantage

vantage, but place themſelves and thoſe they prevail upon within reach of that arm of juſtice wherewith ſhe diſtributes her rewards.

Nor need they deſpiſe thoſe expedients for their own private uſe; for no man, how much ſoever he may ſee in his cloſet, can carry the whole chart of it abroad with him when he enters upon action: therefore it behoves him to nouriſh up vigorous moral ſenſes, and fix a ſtrong approbation upon proper objects, to direct and actuate him upon every particular occaſion; and what he does by their inſtigation will anſwer all purpoſes as effectually as if he could have run his eye along the whole line of expedience. And after all, tho' one man may look further than another, there is none ſo piercing ſighted as to ſee to the very end of the line: for it has been ſhown before, that the effect of our actions extends to diſtant times and regions, far beyond the reach of mortal ken. So that the wiſeſt man can proceed only by rule and guidance, not by knowledge: taking the expedience of his conduct to the welfare of mankind, as an evidence of its being expedient to the inviſible world.

8. But the neceſſity of rules and principles for our direction, gives riſe to a new ſpecies of prudence, which could not have had Being, were

were we capable of taking all our meaſures upon a full knowledge of their expedience: for it is not enough to conſider the uſefulneſs of an action, but we muſt likewiſe take into account how far it may either confirm or weaken the influence of ſome wholeſome rule; becauſe more good or harm may be done that way than by any direct conſeqences of the thing we do. For there is a degree of ſacredneſs belonging to all rules, proportionable to their importance and the authority whereon they reſt, which muſt not be violated without very cogent and evident cauſe. Yet on the other hand, ſince no rule is without exception, there may be too ſtrict an adherence to them, eſpecially when ſome one becomes predominant, ſo as to work a diſregard of all the reſt: which is the caſe with your ſectaries and very violent people of all denominations, who are ſo terrified at the barking dogs of Scylla that they run headlong upon Charibdis. Therefore this neceſſity we have been ſpeaking of, does not ſuperſede the uſe of private judgement, which may find employment enough in comparing rules and principles, in chooſing whoſe guidance we ſhall truſt to, in underſtanding the directions and applying them to particular occaſions.

For it is not enough to follow the beſt authority without ſome caution had of the chan-

nels thro which it paſſes, becauſe theſe have been known ſometimes totally to change the quality of the ſtream. It is reported of him who boaſted of being the oldeſt and I trow the wiſeſt king in Europe, that upon ſome body humbly repreſenting to him that he could not alter the laws without Parliament, Prithee! man, ſays he: don't I make the judges? Then I make the law. So there have been interpreters who have made the law, and the Goſpel, and philoſophy, and right reaſon, to be juſt what they pleaſed. Therefore it behoves us to be circumſpect, not depending upon zeal alone without diſcretion, nor imitating the Papiſts, who if they get rid of ſo much money in what they call charity, no matter how applied, eſteem it a ſure draught on St. Peter: but tho there be a univerſal Bank, unleſs we take the beſt care we can in our ability and the circumſtances of the ſituation, that what we throw in be real ſterling Good, it will make no figure upon our account. Yet no man need diſturb himſelf for unavoidable errors or miſguidings; but may truſt the wiſdom of Providence to bring good profit out of his fooliſhneſs.

9. But tho invincible ignorance will juſtify an error, haſtineſs and paſſion will not: for there are religious paſſions as well as ſenſual and worldly, and the former are more dangerous

rous than the latter by how much the beſt things corrupted become the worſt. The moſt noble enterprizes have been atchieved by a ſedate and ſteady courage, not by a boiſterous impetuoſity. Eſpecially when ſuch ſacrifices as that of Regulus are to be made, it requires the greateſt calmneſs of judgment to examine and weigh all the motives for offering it. For life, health, eaſe and fortune, are not to be thrown away lightly nor wantonly: they are the bleſſings of heaven, well deſerving our value and care to preſerve them, nor is it juſtifiable to part with them unleſs on very weighty conſiderations; becauſe the larger the price is to be paid, the more needful it becomes to examine well the value of the purchaſe and ſecurity of the title. Wherefore there is a due caution to be had in ſeeing that we have a warrant for what we undertake: becauſe elſe, after putting ourſelves to vaſt expence of toil and trouble, we may earn nothing beſide reproof for having omitted a taſk we might have performed more eaſily.

When young people firſt acquire a liking to virtue, the fire of their blood ſometimes lights up an ambition of attempting the moſt arduous exerciſes, and gaining the topmoſt ſummit of it at once. But let them remember how they were led by degrees into the learning or profeſſion they have knowledge of, being

ing taught the rudiments compleatly firſt, and inſtructed in the lower branches before they were permitted to aſſiſt in the grand performances of art: in like manner let them ſtudy the duties of life lying every day in their way, and make themſelves perfect in the common virtues, before they undertake the ſhining. But this knight-errant humour of ſeeking adventures and perilous encounters, quickly ſubſides, unleſs where fomented by enthuſiaſts with their inceſſant rantings; whereby they fright or teaze their followers into painful auſterities, dangerous abſtinences, tedious and fatiguing devotions, no ways conducive to make them more uſefull in their ſtations. Which is juſt as abſurd as if a taylor or a ſhoemaker ſhould live in a boat upon the ſalt water, to enure himſelf to the hardſhips of a ſea voyage: or lie out whole nights in a ditch by way of uſing himſelf to a campaign or a ſiege, to neither of which ſervices he is ever likely to be called. For Providence appoints to every man his ſtation in this world: it is his buſineſs to conſider what are the duties of it, and furniſh himſelf with ſuch qualifications as may carry him thro thoſe duties compleatly; becauſe this will carry him ſureſt to all the happineſs within his power to attain.

For even if faith be the ſaving principle, yet no man can have ſolid grounds to believe he

he has a ſaving faith, otherwiſe than by the fruits it bears: ſo that good works are either the one thing needfull, or the ſole evidence of that which is ſo. But good works are ſuch only as may prove good for ſomething, or from whence good may redound to mankind: and thoſe are the beſt which tend to the moſt beneficial conſequences in our power to produce or in our ſkill to contrive. But whenever duty calls, provided all poſſible care and conſideration be taken to know its voice, no man need fear that he ſhall be a loſer by anſwering the call, whatever hard ſervice or coſtly ſacrifice he be put to: for if the fruits of his labour hang too remote to touch his notice, they will be brought nearer by the reward annexed to the performance.

10. Thus have I brought matters at laſt to an iſſue that I hope will ſcandalize nobody: and this may attone for the liberties taken in arriving at it by an unuſual road; for there is a Latin proverb which ſays The end crowns the work. If I have ſeemed to deviate ſometimes into the paths of freethinking, the orthodox know well there are perſons who have an utter averſion againſt travelling in the beaten track: then they cannot take it amiſs that, by mingling among ſtragglers, I have attempted to bring ſome into the very point whereto they would lead them. Nor can the latter

charge me with playing booty, or practiſing artifices upon them: for they may ſee I have proceeded all along with an unawed freedom, doing my utmoſt to caſt all prejudices aſide, and take every ſtep in the way my beſt judgement ſhould direct. I did indeed ſuſpect at ſetting out that the roads of reaſon and Religion, rightly purſued, would conduct to the ſame end. For if God has given us any commands, as he has no ends of his own to anſwer by them, they muſt have been given for our benefit: therefore we are taught they all terminate in two principal aims: to bring us into a hearty deſire of one another's happineſs equally with our own, and to inſpire us with ſuch juſt ſentiments of himſelf as conduce moſt to our happineſs.

And tho reaſon, whoſe office lies not in giving us an ultimate end of action, but in contriving the ſureſt methods of attaining that ſuggeſted by appetite, can ſet out upon none other bottom than our own intereſt: yet we have ſeen how ſelf-intereſt leads into diſintereſtedneſs, into an unreſerved attachment to the general good, and into a conſtant dependence upon Providence; becauſe were that away, we could find no certain cauſe of all we ſee happen around us, and if we loſe ſight of goodneſs or eſteem any thing left to chance, the ſucceſs of our beſt endeavours will be uncertain

certain and our hopes become like caſtles in the air. So that whether we uſe the daylight or the candle of the Lord, provided we can keep our eyes clear from the films of paſſion and prejudice, we ſhall find objects preſented in the ſame ſhapes and the ſame colours, tho not always with equal luſtre.

11. This conſideration may reſcue philoſophy from the imputation ſhe has lain under with ſome righteous perſons of being dangerous to Religion and piety; it was not uncommon for whoever profeſſed to purſue the light of nature, to be preſently ſuſpected of unſoundneſs in his principles; of a ſecret deſign to undermine the belief of a Providence, if not that fundamental article of all religion, the Being of a God. Nor can it be denied there have been grounds for ſuch ſuſpicion: at leaſt we muſt acknowledge that thoſe who had ſuch evil deſigns, have proceeded by undertaking to explain all phenomena around us by the powers of nature, and attempting to confine the attention of mankind to them alone. But the ſtate of natural philoſophy is not the ſame now as formerly: it is become an innocent inoffenſive ſcience, a uſeful miniſter in the temple of the Lord. In ancient times nature was eſteemed an original ſource of Being diſtinct from the Almighty, matter was thought poſſeſſed of an exiſtence which he

never gave it, and even the elements to have their differences and qualities independent on him; the only province left him being that of gathering them into forms and aſſortments, in order to generate thereby ſuch habitable earths and plants and animals as they were reſpectively capable of producing. And tho theſe notions have been ſince exploded, God being generally acknowledged the Creator as well as Maker of all things viſible and inviſible; yet there ſtill remains an opinion with many of an abſtract, eternal, uncreated nature of things, which controuls the meaſures and directs the wiſdom of God, as well in the exerciſes of his creative power as in the adminiſtration of ſublunary affairs. Thus while there were two Firſt Cauſes ſuppoſed to have a joint ſhare in the production of all events, tis no wonder that ſuch as were zealous for the glory of God, looked with a jealous eye upon every attempt to extend the province of nature, as being an encroachment upon the Divine prerogative and a certain mark of diſloyalty.

But I have endeavoured to exhibit nature in another aſpect, not as an original cauſe, but an eſtabliſhment of the Almighty; her abſtract as well as ſenſible eſſences receiving their permanency, and her courſes their ſtability, from the covenant or immutable Will of God; her

her ſubſtances, both material and ſpiritual, together with their primary as well as ſecondary qualities, their applications to one another, their mutual affections, all effects and events reſulting therefrom, deriving primarily from none other ſource than the power, the wiſdom, the goodneſs, the equity and good pleaſure of their Maker: and the chain of ſecond cauſes producing them, being planned out with certain foreknowledge and exact intention of every particular it ſhould bring forth. Therefore I may hope to ſtand abſolved from all ſuſpicion of impiety, nor need I ſcruple the hazard of adding too largely to nature, for by giving to her I take nothing from God: becauſe nature is the work of God, her acts are his acts, her productions his gifts, her every operation, as well neceſſary as fortuitous, an execution of his Will. I have no where denied that he may ſometimes act immediately without the intervention of ſecond cauſes, or to alter their courſes: on the contrary have offered arguments in ſupport of that opinion. Yet this does not hinder but that we may ſtrive to account for every thing we can by natural cauſes, and retain an averſeneſs againſt multiplying interpoſitions: as believing that whenever made, they are made ſolely for manifeſtation of the Divine power to intelligent creatures, not from a neceſſity to

correct errors in the firſt deſign, which were unforeſeen or could not be provided againſt. Wherefore it may be preſumed they happen very rarely, and then are ſo ſtriking that all endeavours to avoid them will but convince us the more ſtrongly of a divine operation.

12. Neither was the ſtudy of human nature regarded with a more favourable eye than that of the external: for there being a great deal of machinery in the human compoſition, thoſe who applied to a cloſe examination into the ſtructure and workings of that, were apt to think too ſlightly of the ſpiritual part; inſomuch that it was a current ſaying within theſe two hundred years, Wherever you ſee three phyſicians, you ſee two Atheiſts. But I do not apprehend them in the ſame ſentiments now: I have dipped into ſome of their works to gather from thence materials ſuitable to my own ſcience, and they appear to me as orthodox as any other claſs of people among us: nor do I ſeem at a loſs to account for the change. The zeal of the ſpiritualiſts urged them to aſcribe more to the ſpiritual part than belonged to it ſingly: this could not eſcape the obſervation of ſuch whoſe ſtudies had brought them intimately acquainted with the body. They ſaw that underſtanding might ſometimes be reſtored to madmen by medicine; they knew their drugs and chymical prepa-

rations

rations had a powerfull effect upon the imagination, ſo as to warm with ſanguine hope or chill with melancholy and deſpondency: they found that a delicacy of texture in the fibres of the brain, a briſkneſs of circulation, a purity of the circulating juices, gave birth to the natural talents, and a predominancy in ſome one of the principal humours diſtinguiſhed the characters of men: that an unnatural preſſure or a little heterogeneous mixture in the medullary ſubſtance within the head, diſabled the ſoul from exerciſing her functions: and that in general the tenour and colour of our thoughts depended very much upon the preſent diſpoſition of the body. From hence they thought it demonſtrable that powers had been aſcribed to the ſoul which really reſided in the body; and might be tempted too haſtily to conclude that ſhe had none at all belonging to her, but that thought itſelf with all its varieties were nothing more than a lucky configuration and diverſity of motions in matter.

But this temptation is now removed, for an exacter ſcrutiny into the properties of matter and motion, has now convinced the world that no aſſortment of corporeal particles, how nicely ſoever arranged, can form an intelligent Being. And the conviction is ſo general and ſo ſtrong, that a late noble writer, whoſe ru-

ling paſſion, after ambition had been torn from him, being that of running down the clergy and every thing they taught, he would in mere ſpite to them have been an atheiſt if he could, and did bring himſelf to be a thorough corporealiſt, ridiculing the doctrine of ſpiritual ſubſtance with the vile pun of calling it the pneumatic philoſophy: yet could never bring himſelf to believe ſenſe and underſtanding a neceſſary reſult from the human machinery; but taking hold of an expreſſion dropped by Mr. Locke, inſiſted that the faculty of thinking was annexed by Almighty Power to the ſyſtem of matter contained in our ſeveral compoſitions.

Thus the indiſcretion of zealots has hurt the credit of the ſpiritual ſoul, by claiming more for her than was her due: and her intereſts are beſt ſupported by examining fairly what is her lawfull property, and diſtinguiſhing it from thoſe powers which ſhe derives by conjunction with her partner the body. Under this apprehenſion I ſet out in my firſt Chapter with obſerving that there are faculties of the mind and faculties of the man, I have ſince proceeded to ſhow that percipience, rationality, cogitation, ſtudy and all ſpecies of thought, are faculties of the compound: the mind, or purely ſpiritual part, having only a capacity of receiving ſuch perceptions as

ſhall

ſhall from time to time be excited in her, but what perceptions ſhall be ſo excited, depends entirely upon the action of corporeal ſubſtance wherewith ſhe ſtands vitally united. Now the action and qualities of a corporeal agent muſt reſult from the poſition or arrangement and motion of the component particles whereof it conſiſts: ſo that the thoughts and perceptions of the mind follow preciſely according to the poſition and motion of the material corpuſcules affecting her; yet are they her own thoughts and perceptions, never having place in the matter which produced them.

The caſe here ſeems ſomething ſimilar to that of letters in a book: a printer with the very ſame types can run ye off a bible, a Virgil, Newton's optics, Liſle's huſbandry, Joe Millar's jeſts, or Rocheſter's poems. Thoſe books will raiſe very different ſentiments in the mind; and the ideas of him that opens them follow preciſely according to the poſition of the four and twenty letters in the page before him. Nevertheleſs the ſentiments and perceptions are in the mind alone: the books themſelves as they lie cloſed upon the ſhelves, have neither piety nor poetry nor philoſophy nor ribaldry nor other ſentiment belonging to them, nor can they produce any underſtanding or apprehenſion without a reader. In like manner the colours of bodies are holden to depend upon

on the pores in their ſurfaces, and their ſhapes upon the order and diſpoſition of their parts; ſo that you have the ſight of red or blue, of round or ſquare, according to the texture of pores or ſituation of parts in the objects you ſucceſſively look upon: yet all the colours and figures in the world ſhut up by themſelves, can never produce a ſenſe of viſion without an eye to behold them.

Thus let the corporealiſts inſiſt as ſtrongly as they pleaſe that the characters and thoughts of men reſult from their machinery and organization, we have a ready anſwer, that ſuch reſult could not take place unleſs there were a perceptive ſpirit to receive the action of the machine: and for any body to imagine otherwiſe would be as abſurd as to ſuppoſe that a bible might raiſe a ſentiment of Religion without a reader to peruſe it, or the graſs a ſenſation of green without an eye to diſcern it. Then as the mind has an activity too, by which ſhe can turn to any page or object within her reach, fitted to exhibit particular ideas and appearances before her, and likewiſe ſome command over her mental organs to put them upon exciting particular trains of thought and meditation: there is no leſs room for prudence and good management in the exerciſe of this power than if, as formerly apprehended, ſhe performed her cogitative

tative functions wholly retired within herſelf without aid of any material inſtrument whatever.

13. There are ſome particulars not uſually taken notice of, which I have been led to conſider in my enquiry into the nature of the mind: as ſubſtance, individuality, an extent of preſence, and the co-exiſtence or contiguity of agent and patient in all immediate action. It is the faſhion to paſs over ſuch ſubjects ſlightly as matters of mere curioſity and wanton ſpeculation, to be remembered no further than for entertaining the company in converſation with the peculiar notions of ſuch an author, without caring whether there is any truth in them or no. But I humbly conceive them to be matters of ſome moment: therefore wiſh they might be maturely weighed and ruminated upon by perſons who have a talent that way, For I am not ſo confident of my own deciſions as to deſire they ſhould be taken upon truſt: I had rather every one would ſatisfy himſelf by the carefull exerciſe of his own underſtanding, and diſcover any latent fallacy that may have eſcaped my penetration. To me it ſeems no trifling diſcovery to know that we are real ſubſtances, not meerly qualities, either neceſſarily reſulting from certain ſyſtems of organized matter or annexed thereto by the arbitrary Will of

our

our Maker. For our being ſubſtances ſeems the ſtrongeſt evidence that can be had from natural reaſon, of our perpetual duration: becauſe ſubſtances can never be deſtroyed by any operation of ſecond cauſes, whereas ſecondary qualities reſulting from compoſition cannot ſurvive the diſſolution of their compounds, and a quality annexed miraculouſly to ſome ſyſtem muſt be preſumed to ceaſe as ſoon as the ſyſtem is broken up. Then if the mind be ſubſtance it muſt be an individual: becauſe if it were not, it would be a ſyſtem of ſo many diſtinct ſubſtances as the parts it contains, and the perceptive and active faculties would be reſulting or annexed qualities belonging to the ſyſtem.

But the mind being a true individual, not conſiſting of parts whoſe various diſpoſition among one another might produce a change of form or quality, muſt be always the ſame in herſelf that ſhe ever was. And this individuality of the mind will help us to a clearer and ſteddier idea of perſonality, the identity of perſon conſtantly accompanying that of the perceptive individual: for though we vulgarly apprehend our whole human compoſition to be ourſelves, and the body continually changes both in form and ſubſtance from the cradle to the grave, yet we eſteem ourſelves the ſame perſon all along; and whatever

compoſition

compoſition of quite different ſubſtance, ſize and make, it may pleaſe God to caſt us into in ſome future ſtage of our exiſtence, while it ſerves for organs of perception and inſtruments of action to the ſame individual, we ſhall apprehend it to be our own perſons. Nor, provided we remember our preſent ſtate and know that we have been for ſome time diſunited, ſhall doubt of its being a reſurrection of the ſame body: as likewiſe its aptneſs of organization to ſerve for higher uſes of intelligence and activity, will denominate it a ſpiritual body, in contradiſtinction to our preſent which is ſtiled the natural or carnal. Add further that this individuality affords a ſtrong preſumption of our intrinſic equality, becauſe all the difference of powers, faculties, underſtanding and character, we know of among perceptive Beings, reſults from the compounds whereof they are reſpectively made ingredients, or the changes worked in them by the action of external objects: and every one is capable of exchanging conditions with every other, upon being vitally united to the ſame material organization and furniſhed with the ſame proviſion of externals.

The ſphere of preſence occupied by the mind, and contiguity in immediate action, depend upon one another: and here it will be proper

to

to conſider whether, in the moſt diſtant operation, there muſt not be a contact or co-exiſtence in the ſame place, of the ſeveral media as they tranſmit the action; or whether the Poſtulatum I have aſſumed may be denied, to wit, that nothing can act or be acted upon while there is the leaſt hair-breadth diſtance intervening, unleſs there be ſome medium paſſing between them, and then the medium muſt be contiguous to the agent on receiving, and to the patient on tranſmitting the impulſe. A tower twenty miles off may ſtrike a ſenſation upon us; but then the rays muſt fall upon the tower and be reflected from thence to our eyes, ſtopping at the retina: the vibrations they excite there are propagated along the optic nerves to ſome corpuſcules lying within or contiguous to the mind herſelf, from whoſe immediate action alone ſhe receives her ſenſation. But ſince we receive ſenſations from more corpuſcules together than can poſſibly come in contact with a mathematical point, it ſeems to follow demonſtrably that the mind exiſts or is toti-preſent throughout a diſtinguiſhable portion of ſpace, large enough for all thoſe corpuſcules to enter or ſtand round. Then as the perceptions of the mind depend ſolely upon the action and modification of theſe corpuſcles, it will be worth while to conſider whether the like action and modification

fication may not be produced by other objects than thoſe fitted to ſtrike upon our preſent groſs corporeal organs, and ſhorter channels than thoſe employed in our animal machinery; or nature may not have other ways of exciting perceptions in us than thoſe we now experience.

14. As to the hypotheſes, I never propounded them for articles of faith, therefore am under no temptation to think the leſs favourably of anybody for rejecting them; they are intended only to illuſtrate the poſſibility of a mutual relation between things ſeen and unſeen, to the imaginations of ſuch perſons who are not thoroughly reconciled to the idea of heavy bodies like our own, of fleeting ſhadows, of winged angels and an eternity of pſalm-ſinging, which have been ſo ſucceſsfully employed upon the many as to render any other repreſentation needleſs for common uſe; and who have ſo full a perſuaſion of the Divine wiſdom and entire command over all the powers of nature, as to believe that the ſentences of the laſt judgement may be executed, reward and puniſhment adminiſtered, by certain ſtated laws eſtabliſhed for governing the operation of ſecond cauſes. Nevertheleſs I muſt confeſs myſelf fond enough to fancy thoſe hypotheſes not confined to bare poſſibility, nor

without a conſiderable degree of probability too: but then I would deſire not to be miſtaken in the grounds which this probability is built upon. I do not pretend to prove the reality of the little fœtus, forming and faſhioning within us by any experience of my own: I never felt it move nor had other ſenſible evidence of its exiſtence, for I have not the knack of inward feelings, like the Methodiſts and the Quakers, though perhaps I have paſſed as many hours in ſilence and retirement within myſelf as either of them. Thus much indeed, I think appears from the lectures of anatomiſts, that the laſt action of the machine traceable by their ſcience, that is, the inner ends of our nerves, ſtretch over a much larger compaſs than the ſphere of the mind's preſence can be ſuppoſed to extend to: from whence it neceſſarily follows there muſt be ſome fine material organization, minuter than all the contrivances of anatomy can diſcover, between the nerves and the mind, for tranſmitting their action onwards to her. And conſtant experience of our habits, our paſſions, inclinations, taſtes and various ways of thinking contracted by cuſtom, may convince us that our daily actions, diſcourſes and thoughts, have an effect upon the moſt internal part of our compoſition, ſo as to work a permanent change of form and diſpoſition there. But

But whether this organization be drawn out in ſuch an ethereal cobweb as repreſented in the Chapter on the Vehicles, or whether upon death it ſhall detach from the nerves and fly off together with the ſpiritual inhabitant encloſed therein, or ſhall ſtill continue diverſly diſpoſed in make and texture, according to what has paſſed with it during life, I do not undertake to decide by any branch of phyſiology; what I have offered upon thoſe points I give only as hypotheſis, whoſe probability muſt reſt entirely upon ſuch evidence as can be drawn in its favour from that ſole fountain whence we can gather any concluſion concerning things unſeen, namely our idea of the divine Attributes and adminiſtration of affairs throughout the moral world. But it being a general received tenet that this life is a preparation for the next, the ſoul of the wicked going forth in a condition utterly unfit for heaven, ſo as that if admitted there, it could find no reliſh in the joys of the place; one cannot eaſily imagine how this could be the caſe, unleſs the ſoul were underſtood of an organized compound which might receive alteration by the habits contracted upon earth. For if there be an intrinſic difference among individuals, it muſt have been made in them at their creation, and continue in them ſo long as they continue in being: becauſe a perceptive indi-

vidual is capable of no change in form or quality, or other alteration than that momentary one of ſucceſſive perceptions excited by the action of objects upon it. The ſame reaſon, joined to the belief that a good man may fall from his goodneſs and the wicked ſincerely repent, will evince that the virtues and vices reſide in the organization, not in the individual: and that the perceptive ſpirit of a reprobate is as fit to animate a glorified body, if divine juſtice could permit it entrance therein, as that of the moſt exemplary Chriſtian.

The ſuppoſition of a Mundane Soul ſeems to fill imagination with the higheſt idea it can contain of the divine power and magnificence, leaving no part in the boundleſs empire uninhabited: to connect the whole hoſt of material and ſpiritual Beings under one all-comprehenſive polity: to ſuggeſt uſes for the moſt diſtant bodies diſcoverable, and minuteſt particles conceivable: and beſt to reconcile the exiſtence of evil with our notions of infinite goodneſs, by reducing it to a ſcarce perceptible proportion in compariſon with the vaſt profuſion of happineſs abounding every where. All this I think might carry the force of demonſtration if it were not for one weak link in the chain, which is, that the plan of univerſal government muſt be executed by methods

thods which we are capable of laying down upon the chart of our imagination: but I am ſo ſenſible of the narrowneſs of our faculties that I cannot lay any ſtreſs upon this aſſumption. Nevertheleſs we are encouraged upon the beſt authorities to frame ſuch ideas of the things unſeen as we can imagine: and the good effects reſulting from the hypotheſes may plead excuſe for a favourable propenſity towards them. For if any man ſhould happen to entertain a ſtrong perſuaſion of their being real truths, it muſt give him a grand opinion of the lot of his exiſtence; abate his fondneſs for the paltry pleaſures of this world; make him ſenſible of the intrinſic equality between fellow-creatures and mutual connection of intereſts among them, that ſtrongeſt cement of union and firmeſt ſupport of univerſal hearty charity.

15. Theſe conſequences may ſerve for my apology with ſuch as might charge me with drawing off men's attention from the light of the Goſpel by fixing it upon that of nature: for an endeavour to profit by the one does by no means imply a ſlight of the other, becauſe both rightly purſued will for the moſt part conduct to the ſame points. I have introduced ſeveral texts in the courſe of my progreſs, to ſhow the conformity of their dictates with

the deciſions of human reaſon: and the concluſions of the laſt ſection, which appear reſulting from the main tenour of my deſign, are ſtrongly inculcated in the ſacred ſcriptures. If that of intrinſic equality be thought otherwiſe at firſt ſight, yet upon mature conſideration it will be found to follow neceſſarily from that which I take to be a favourite doctrine of Scripture, namely, that it is God who giveth us both to will and to do: and whether he give them by his ſecond cauſes of formation in the womb, of education, good examples and converſation, or by ſupernatural grace, all theſe lie under his abſolute diſpoſal and were ſettled by his eternal purpoſe before the foundations of the world. So that we are nothing in ourſelves, no better one than another; our faith, our holineſs, our zeal to good works and our virtues, being not originally our own, nor created with us, but derived ſolely from his bounty: and he could as eaſily have given them to Judas or Simon Magus as to John or Paul.

The ſtudy of nature is ſo far from being a mark of hoſtile diſpoſition to the ſacred records, that we cannot receive the full benefit from them, nor even enter into their true ſpirit without it: they muſt have ſome interpreter, and if human reaſon be not employed, paſſion or prejudice or vanity or peculiarity or whim-

ſy

ſy or private intereſt will intrude into the office, and what wild work they can make ſtands ſufficiently manifeſted by fatal experience. There is ſcarce an abſurdity that has not been proved by the Goſpel. Papal tyranny ſtood upon the donation of the keys to Peter: the cruelties of perſecution were authorized by the order Compell them to come in: the Romiſh legends, the rantings of methodiſm, Barclay's apology for the Quakers, the dreams of the Moravians, the treatiſes of all ſectaries, appear thick ſtuck with texts: even Mahomet could find a prophecy of himſelf in the Comforter who was to come and ſhow us all things. Every one of theſe pretend that theirs is the genuine ſence, and all other interpretations a perverſion of Scripture: but what likelier method can be taken for deciding among them, than by comparing them with that other Code which God has written in legible characters upon his works? which compariſon cannot be made without a carefull attentive peruſal and competent knowledge of both.

The profeſſed deſign of the whole Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſation was to reſtore Man to that perfection of his nature wherein he was created: therefore the doctrines, the precepts, the examples, the inſtitutions recorded there, muſt be regarded as the materia medica proper for a diſtempered conſtitution. For

the commands of God are not arbitrary: he has made nothing our duty by his authority, which he had not before made our intereſt by the circumſtances of that nature whereof he has permitted us to partake. Hence his rules of government for the brutes are often contrary to thoſe enjoined to Man, becauſe their natures are ſo: to the former he has ſaid by his laws of inſtinct, Thou ſhalt do murder, Thou ſhalt commit adultery; ſo the wolf makes it his buſineſs to worry the harmleſs ſheep, the pike is taught to prey upon his own ſpecies, the bull has commerce with his mother, his ſiſters and his daughters, he breaks fence into his neighbour's farming to drive away a weaker bull and ſeize upon his ſeraglio. But theſe practices muſt introduce continual diſorder and confuſion among men, and loſe them the moſt valuable benefits of ſociety: yet ſome might not ſee thoſe conſequences in particular inſtances, and more would be ſo intent upon preſent gratification as not to mind conſequences at all. Therefore God has iſſued his commands to Man, ſaying, Thou ſhalt do no murder, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery, and enforced them with rewards and puniſhments for a remedy againſt the ſhortſightedneſs and weakneſs of human nature: that they may ſerve as an inſtruction to the prudent to warn him of an evil tendency he did not diſcern, and a powerfull

powerfull reſtraint upon the ſenſual to withhold him from running into miſchiefs he would not have heeded at a diſtance.

Nor yet does it ſuffice that we have a compleat diſpenſary of remedies without knowing how to apply them in particular caſes; and for gaining the art of making proper application it behoves the phyſician to ſtudy, not only the materia medica, but likewiſe the conſtitution, the diſorders incident thereto, the preſent habit of body in the patient, and in what condition of ſolids and humours a ſoundneſs of health conſiſts. Now in the ſcience of medicine reſpecting the mind, our foundation muſt be taken from the ſenſitivo-rational conſtitution of Man, by contemplation of which it will preſently occur, that the perfection of our nature lies in an entire ſubjection of the ſenſitive faculties to the rational: it will then appear upon due conſideration of the matter, that the rational faculty conſtantly prompts to purſue the general or greater good, in all actions which may anywiſe affect another perſon or number of perſons; and tho' many of our actions concern nobody beſide ourſelves, yet even here it will recommend our own general good, in preference to any particular pleaſure that ſtands at preſent uppermoſt in the fancy.

This then is the perfect ſoundneſs of health and ought to be made the ultimate intention of all applications, namely, to have the inferior faculties ſo well diſciplined as that they may ſtand always ready to aſſiſt the ſuperiour in a ſteady proſecution of that aim, the attainment of greater good preferably to the leſs. It will be requiſite further to examine what particular diſorders of the mind upon any occaſion prevent the due ſubordination of her powers, to which of them the remedies preſcribed are reſpectively applicable, what is their natural efficacy, and in what manner they operate: taking our meaſures from the nature of the medicine and nature of the diſtemper, not looking for an ideal abſtract goodneſs or ſecret virtue transferable from the one to the other, nor ſupernatural powers annexed arbitrarlily by the Will of God. Whereby we ſhall beſt learn how to adminiſter the proper quantity and vary the ſeveral ſpecies according to the circumſtances of the caſe: eſcaping the extravagance of zealots who think to do every thing with one recipe, which like Tar water, is to cure all maladies and can never be poured down in too copious draughts.

16. But this general good for the moſt part lies too remote to be ſeen diſtinctly at a ſingle glance, and the paths leading to it are too intricate and too much involved among one another

nother for us to diſcern which is the propereſt to be purſued upon every preſent occaſion: for our own ſubſequent actions, thoſe of other people and the uncertain workings of external cauſes, will often interfere to change the effect of thoſe we undertake, and render that inexpedient which appears eligible to our preſent apprehenſion. Therefore to make the wilderneſs practicable there muſt be paſſages worked out, particular rules and directions framed, by which a common man may find his way in every ſituation wherein he happens to ſtand; and under-aims branched out conducting to the principal, which muſt be varied from time to time according to the variation of circumſtances occurring. For the greater good is ſometimes attained by a cloſe attention to ourſelves and our private advantages, to making proviſion for the body as well as the mind, to divertiſements and pleaſures for the recreation of both, to rivalſhip, contention and artifice, to oppoſition, cenſure and puniſhment of ſuch as would bring damage upon ourſelves or our neighbours.

But pleaſures cannot be well enjoyed, nor contention and oppoſition carried on ſucceſsfully, without a thorough engagement to the objects before us: for if the mind be drawn off by contemplation of diſtant proſpects and conſequences,

conſequences, ſhe can never exert her efforts ſufficiently to compaſs the buſineſs in hand. Now this occaſional attachment to private emolument, to divertiſement and preſent pleaſure, to the means of diſappointing, diſpleaſing and hurting other perſons, has a tendency to draw men from their principal aim; induces many, who ſee the neceſſity of ſuch attachment, to think a ſteady purſuit of the general good a romantic impracticable ſcheme; and raiſes the greateſt difficulties to a ſcholar in the ſcience of morality. Which difficulties muſt be removed, and the grounds laid down whereupon the general intereſt requires that we ſhould turn our back upon it for a while, before a ſyſtem can be ſtricken out that ſhall be practical or fit for common uſe: that ſhall neither miſlead the ſerious into a plan of life utterly unfit for the world, nor the ſanguine into an averſion againſt virtue as debarring them from all innocent enjoyment and the proſecution of their allowable deſires.

This is what I do not pretend to have done, as being too much for one undertaking. My addreſs is made to the Few, and my aim extends no further than to ſuggeſt a clue by help whereof a performance, intended for the Many, may be better calculated to anſwer its purpoſe. Which it ſeems likelieſt to be when the operator abſtains from the ideal world of abſtract unſubſtantial

unſubſtantial Beings, eſſential rectitude in rules, intrinſic goodneſs, holineſs or merit in opinions or practices, and ſecret energies paſſing from things external into the mind itſelf; whereby Religion and philoſophy have ſometimes been made a myſtery throughout, a tiſſue of unmeaning words filling the ear and raiſing whirlwinds in the imagination but never touching the underſtanding, or turned into ſyſtems of occult quality and magic: but when inſtead of taking this rout, he bends his whole thoughts to examine every thing by its natural tendency to the greater good, ſo as to explain when and why it is better that a man ſhould turn the right cheek to him that has ſmitten the left, deny himſelf innocent pleaſures, forego his private advantages, hazard his life, his health and all his valuables, for the ſake of other perſons; and when it is more for the general good that he ſhould follow his pleaſures or profit, take care of his health, his family, his eſtate, oppoſe or rival, thwart, cenſure or puniſh; for if none of theſe things were ever done by the virtuous, how would the world be the better as human nature ſtands circumſtanced at preſent? or if he cannot explain theſe points to every capacity, yet let him take care to underſtand them himſelf, and recommend nothing to another which he

cannot

cannot explain the reaſons of to his own ſatisfaction.

Therefore as I have not been able to run theſe profitable lengths, I cannot boaſt of great ſervices to the public: but ſhall found my contentment upon the hope that my labours may prove the remote occaſion of more extenſive good being done to my compatriots, or perhaps to mankind in general.

F I N I S.

ERRATA in VOL. I. PART I.

PAGE xxii. line 6, *dele* his. xxix, 21, *after* we *add* may. xxxi, 11, *for* was *read* were. xlvi. 8, *after* fibly *add* it. 14, 13, *for* at not R. not at. 14. 26, *for* imaginations R. imagination. 16, 29, *after* as *add* a. 17, 3, *for* occurring R. concurring. 32. 29, *for* dangers R. danger. 33, 10, *for* this while R. the while. 3[illegible], [illegible], *for* Julus R. Iulus. 39, 1, *for* feed R. feel. 40, 23, *for* of R. in. 51, 11, *for* Clogher R. Cloyne. 62, 7, *for* traverfing R. converfing. 54, 5, *after* them *add* down, 7, *dele* not 55, 19, *after* fame *add* time. 61, 11, *for* thereon R. thrown. 64, 15, *for* received R. required. 67, 4, *for* with R. to. 75, 17, *for* pain R. pains. 83, 28. *for* fets R. fits. 95, 5, *for* including R. excluding 104, 14, *for* the R. their. 22, *for* be R. we. 26, *for* prehenfions R. prehenfion. 110, 9, *after* have *add* fuch. 117, 27, *for* caution R. action. 120, 7, *for* at R. to. 124, 5, *for* continued R. continual. 24, *for* tender R. under. 129, 20, *for* compatible, R. incompatible. 136, 24, *for* my R. the. 146, 21, *for* mingle R. mingled. 148, 19, *for* chufe R. ufe. 150, 18, *after* not *add* a. 156 11, *after* incentive *add* to. 159, 5, *after* acts *add* done. 163, 17, *for* his R. the 165 5, *for* brethren R. brother. 177, 29, *for* cloyed R. clogged. 182, 3, *after* there *add* then. 190, 17, *after* our *add* own. 191, 25, *for* propogate R. propagate. 194, 11, *for* naufeous R. noifome, 195, 2, *for* leffen R. leffon. 22, *for* offends R. offended. 208, 12, *for* depends R. depend. 215, 12, *for* diftinction R. difpofition. 15, *for* its R. the. 223, 21, *for* the perfon R. her perfon. 227, 8, *for* country R. county. 228, 14, *for* curtain R. curtains. 240, 15, *for* feems R. feem. 245, 22, *after* muft *add* have. 247, 23, *for* founds R. found. 251, 16, *for* looking, R. loking. 252, 15, *for* proceed R proceeded. 253, 27, *for* turns R. trains. 254, 26, *for* part R. parts. 260, 25, *for* Orders R. Order. 261, 3, *for* had R. have. 269, 14, *for* channel r. channels. 278, 6, *for* fubfervient, r. fubfequent. 280, 3, *dele* of. 281, 5, *for* were r. where. 283, 11, *for* any r. either. 17, *for* evidences r. evidence. 22, *after* to *add* know. 284, 14, *dele* the. 286, 4, *for* fubjects r. objects. 291, 27, *for* fixes r. fixing. 296, 17, *for* was never r. never was. 301, 14, 23. *for* even r. ever. 304 8. *dele* in. 307, 16, *for* either r. one. 309, 8, *dele* ever. 314, 7, *for* Academies r. Academics. 332, 7, *for* Thus r. This. 333, 29, *for* difcover, r. perceive. 339, 2[illegible] *for* terms r. term 340. 5, *for* ourfelves r. themfelves. 343, 9, *after* are *dele* a 344 27, *for* ftretching r. ketching. 359, 20, *after* are *add* the. 367, 15, *after* to *add* the. 369, 25. *for* ftrongly r. deeply. 373, 20, *after* is *add* the. 376, 19, *for* difcernable r. difcernible. 377, 28, *for* notion r. motion.

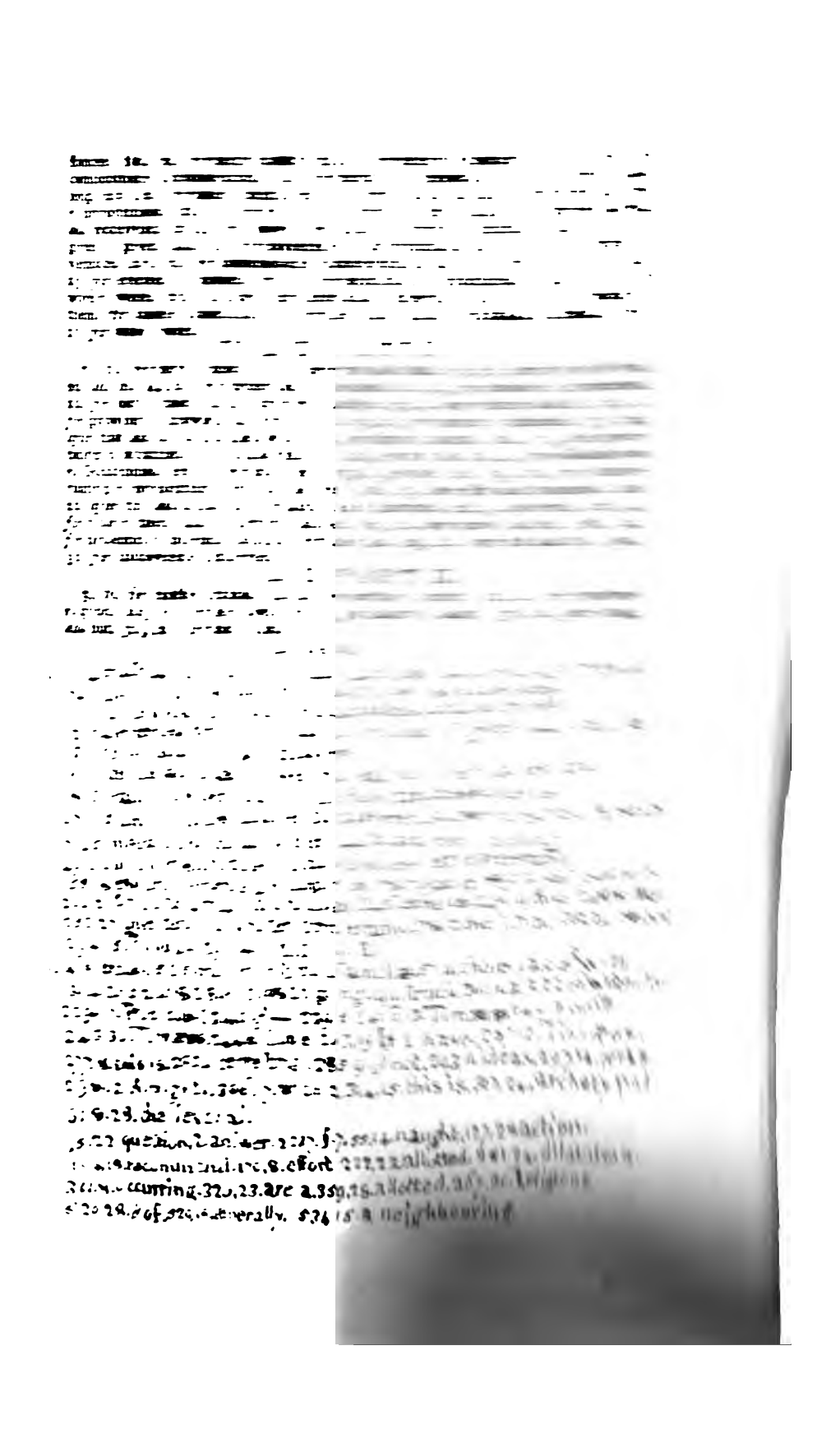
VOL. I. PART II.

33, 23, *for* fatisfactions r. fatisfaction. 35, 30, *for* whiftle r. whiffle. 46, 6, *after* or *add* other. 52, 19, *for* keeps r. keep. 54, 26, *after* fuch *add* only. 58. 25, *for* little r. title. 61, 6, *for* motion r. motive, 19, *for* force r. forces. 66, 14, *for* principal r. principle. 92, 8, *for* or r. on. 129, 10, for excouraging r. encouraging. 134, 4, *for* even r. ever. 143, 2. *for* were r. where. 154, 1, *for* fevices r. fervices. 160, *for* univerfal r. univerfally. 161, 16, *for* omiffions r. omiffion. 164, 22, *for* find r. lofe. 167, [illegible], *after* make *add* a. 170, 5, *dele* more. 30, *for* decifion r. deciftons. 171, 2, *for* move r. prove. 191, 27, *for* gets r. goes. 204, 15, *for* pfts r. poft 214. 2[illegible] *for* it r. us. 215, 5, 10, *for* Zenyrus r. Zopyrus. 227, 21, *for* putting r. pu[illegible] 235, 14, *dele* place. 238, 17, *for* frailty r. frailty. 275, 14, *for* arrives r. drives 301, 4, *for* experience r. expedience. 26, *for* arguments r. engagements. 314, 12 *for* earthly r. earthy. 332, 7, *for* diftinc r. difpofi[illegible]. 330, 14, *dele* us. 343. 3[illegible], *after* under *add* a. 358, 28, *for* erroneous r. enormous. 367, 7, *for* obligations r. obligations. 377, 4, *after* Firft *add* for, *for* dipofition r. difpofition.

VOL. II. PART I.

12, 3, *after* it *add* then. 29, 14, *for* deas r. ideas. 24, *after* no *add* lower. 30. denomination r. denominator. 32, 12, *for* than r. then. 35, 24, *for* diverfity r. verfly. 42, 28, *for* of r. off. 46, 6, *dele* and. 55, 12, *for* unimaginable r. unmarvellable. 64, 5, *for* withdraw r. will draw. 71, 25, *for* proportions r. properties 29, *for* perceive r. conceive, 73, 12, *after* muft *add* not. 76, 30, *after* if *add* it. 84, 27, *for* either r. other. 86, 2, *for* ftones r. ftone. 89, 20, *for* or r. nor. 92, *for* other r. ether. 95, 26, *for* portant r. pertinent. 104, 7, *for* difapproves r. proves. 105, 8, *for* fineft r. feweft. 107, 17, *after* is *add* not. 111, 30, *for* fpirit r. fpirits. 119. 24, *for* difpute r. difputes. 128, 30, *for* perceptibility r. perceptty. 145. 26, *for* compound r. compounds. 149, 22, *for* elude r. exclude. 150. *after* he *add* will. 157, 10, *after* we *add* may. 164, 23, *for* day r. way. 166, wherefore r. whereof. 177, 10, *after* fee *add* the. 179, 14, *for* fubftance r. [illegible]

ftance.



SEP 13 1928

LENOX LIBRARY

Bancroft
Purcha